

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

FOR THE

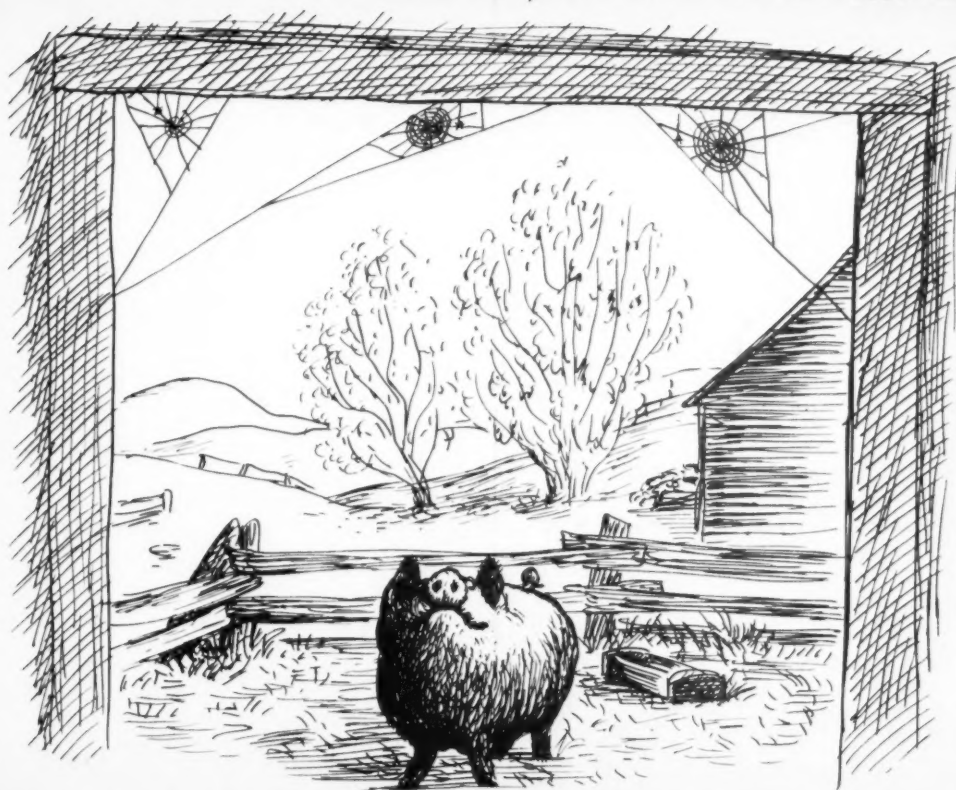
TEACHER OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

AND LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN

TECHNIQUES FOR READING

TECHNIQUES IN WRITING INSTRUCTION

TECHNIQUES IN READING AND THE LANGUAGE ARTS



See Introductory Notes

*Recent
Heath
Professional
Books
in the
Elementary
Field*

A list of other Heath
professional books
will be sent
upon request

**D. C. HEATH
AND
COMPANY**

Sales Offices: NEW YORK 14
CHICAGO 16 SAN FRANCISCO 5
ATLANTA 3 DALLAS 1
Home Office: BOSTON 16

Supervision as Human Relations

John A. Bartky

Dr. Bartky is consistent in his thesis that supervisors are teachers of teachers. He treats individual differences of personality; gives examples of interviews, case histories, etc.; and suggests solutions for conflict difficulties frequently met by administrators. 319 pages. \$4.25.

**The Language Arts in the
Elementary School**

Ruth G. Strickland

This text, based upon the psychological development of the child, traces all aspects of oral and written work from early childhood through the elementary years. Bibliographies. 384 pages. \$4.25.

**Child Psychology,
A Dynamic Approach**

Leigh Peck

Coverage is scientific yet not too technical for helpfulness to every teacher. The book is written in a warmly human style; illustrated with case histories; and filled with suggestions that can be applied to real life situations. 536 pages. \$5.25.

The Role of Elementary Education

Baxter, Lewis, Cross

A study of specific instructional procedures and of the everyday problems of teaching and guidance. The book includes realistic case studies of children, teachers, and parents in interacting relationships. 384 pages. \$4.50.

Teaching Children in the Middle Grades

Alvina Treut Burrows

"Certainly any sincere, thoughtful teacher can become a much more effective teacher by a careful study of this fine book." "A lot of hard sense plus sparkling suggestions." 297 pages. \$4.00.

By Way of Introduction . . .

In January we published a story by Lucy Nulton entitled, "Eight-Year-Olds Tangled in Charlotte's Web." It told about children's delight in a recent E. B. WHITE book. This month we carry on our cover an illustration from CHARLOTTE'S WEB, with permission from Harper and Brothers. The picture is by Garth Williams.

ELIZABETH and RICHARD PILANT have been indefatigable in their efforts to create understanding of and sympathy for folklore among teachers. Our leading article this month explains the uses of folklore in the education of children.

CONSTANCE McCULLOUGH agreed, at the Los Angeles convention of the Council, to do a guest editorial for this magazine. Apparently the discourse got out of hand, because it turned out to be an article. A stimulating and very readable one, as is to be expected from Constance.

Readers of PROFESSOR WILLARD ABRAHAM's article may detect some conflict between it and Dr. McCullough's, although the two writers will surely agree on most of the points under discussion. How valid is Abraham's estimation of current practice?

MRS. BETTY SLESINGER, who describes her successful experiences with remedial reading in this issue, writes stories for both children and grownups, as well as professional articles.

BERNICE J. WOLFSON was inspired to write her helpful article on "bibliother-

apy" by the contribution of Hannah Lindahl and Katherine Koch in this magazine for November, 1952. The latter article dealt with the intermediate grades.

The article by GWYN R. CLARK is based on a University of Utah study entitled, *The Written Language of Eleven and Twelve Year Old Children*.

MR. GORDON S. SALISBURY feels that the most important point in his article relates to his *Catalog of Free Reading Aids*, which is available from him at P. O. Box 943, Riverside, California, for \$1.25.

EDNA FURNESS is well known for her contributions to educational and literary magazines. She has written numerous articles on the teaching of English as a second language. Dr. Furness' poetry and her translations of Latin American poetry have appeared in literary journals and anthologies.

LOUISE HOVDE MORTENSEN contributes another in her series of dramatic "quickies." There will be others.

A few years ago ALTHEA BEERY contributed to *Elementary English* one of the few really helpful articles on listening then available. It has been cited and quoted widely since. In this issue she presents a thorough and well-documented summary of the available research, along with some illuminating interpretations. The article is part of a series edited by Professor A. Sterl Artley for the National Conference on Research in English.

Elementary ENGLISH

An official organ of the NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

8110 S. Halsted Street, Chicago 20, Illinois

FOUNDED, 1924, BY C. C. CERTAIN

JOHN J. DEBOER, Editor

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL

President

Lou La Brant

First Vice Presidents

John C. Gerber

Second Vice President

Joseph Mersand

Elementary Section

Edna L. Sterling

High School Section

Luella B. Cook

College Section

Barris Mills

Past Presidents

Lennox Grey

Harlen M. Adams

ELEMENTARY SECTION COMMITTEE

Edna L. Sterling

Chairman

Irean Coyner

Muriel Crosby

Agnes Gunderson

Grace Rawlings

Ruth E. Swanbeck

John H. Treanor

*Executive Secretary
of the Council*

J. N. Hook

MARCH, 1954

- 130 By Way of Introduction
- 131 American Folk Literature for Children
ELIZABETH PILANT
- 136 Groping or Grouping?
CONSTANCE M. MCCULLOUGH
- 139 A New Look at Reading
WILLARD ABRAHAM
- 144 The Problem of the Retarded Reader
BETTY SAPADIN SLESINGER
- 146 Reading about Emotions
BERNICE J. WOLFSON
- 150 Writing Situations to Which Children Respond
GWYN R. CLARKE
- 156 Functional Letter Writing
GORDON S. SALISBURY
- 158 Teaching Procedures for Spelling
EDNA LUE FURNESS
- 163 Creative Drama Exercises
LOUISE HOVDE MORTENSEN
- 164 Interrelationships between Listening
and Other Language Arts
ALTHEA BEERY
- 173 Current English Forum
EDWARD L. ANDERSON
- 174 The Educational Scene
Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS
- 179 Professional Publications
- 180 Books for Children
Edited by MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH is published monthly from October to May by the National Council of Teachers of English at 8110 S. Halsted Street, Chicago 20, Illinois. Subscription price \$3.50 per year; single copies 45 cents. Orders for less than a year's subscription will be charged at the single copy rate. *Postage is prepaid on all orders from the United States, Mexico, Cuba, Porto Rico, Panama Canal Zone, Republic of Panama, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, Uruguay, Hawaiian Islands, Philippine Islands, Guam, Samoan Islands, Virgin Islands and Spain. *Postage is charged extra for Canada and for all other countries in the Postal Union as follows: 24 cents on annual subscription (total \$3.74), on single copies 3 cents (total 48 cents). *Patrons are requested to make all remittances payable to THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH in checks, money orders, or bank drafts. *Claims for missing numbers should be made within the month following the regular month of publication. The publishers expect to supply missing numbers free only when losses have been sustained in transit and when the reserve stock will permit. *All communications should be addressed to THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, 8110 S. Halsted Street, Chicago 20, Illinois. †Entered as second class matter December 30, 1942, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois under the Act of March 3, 1879. ‡Additional entry at Seymour, Indiana.

Copyright, 1954 by THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH.

Printed in the U. S. A.

ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

XXXI

MARCH, 1954

No. 3

American Folk Literature for Children

ELIZABETH PILANT¹

Folk literature is a broad enough term without using "folklore," which in some scholarly quarters can include almost anything (cf., *Standard Dictionary of Folklore*, Funk-Wagnalls). And let us hope there will be no boggling about the term "American folk literature." Here that term refers to folk literature current among any considerable group within the political boundaries of the United State at this time without reference to ultimate origins or dispersions. Ideally folk literature is the oral literature of a people handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth independently of (or even inimically to) the literary tradition that survives by virtue of print. But oral literature does not lose its folk quality simply by being printed. Nor does the speaking of art literature over the radio, television, or by recording make it any less art literature.

By its nature folk literature cannot be a body of knowledge utterly unfamiliar to you as teachers. The values and uses of it for school purposes may be clearer to some than others. Some of us have made no effort to identify or classify our literary material in this manner.

Characteristically folk literature is not generally known to be the product of any particular named author. That does not

mean one holds to the old community composition theory. It does not mean that some few people may not know the name of the author of a particular piece in the general domain. It simply means that a song, tale, or saying has become more important in itself than by reason of its being the work of a generally known author.

Some authorities familiar with the nature of folklore or oral literature feel able to predict some years ahead that certain items by authors known today will in thirty years be part of the nameless mass of folk literature. Some authorities do not demand that a bit of folklore literature must first pass the test of having been known to be in oral circulation for thirty years (conventionally considered a generation). Others hold that the same piece of literature is an art product to some and a piece of folk literature at the same time to others, depending upon whether the former knew the item solely through print and the latter knew it only by word of mouth transmission.

In England Lord Raglan seems to have many supporters for his theory that folklore is art literature in decay. That is, he feels folk tales and songs were first known products of a name author in court circles

¹Ball State Teachers College, Muncie, Indiana.

or polite literature and that later these fragments (now called folklore) survived only in the less literate portions of the population.

In this country today there is considerable emphasis placed on the "creative use" of folklore models for the production by known persons of new "folklore" pieces. The general contention is that folk literature is so familiar in pattern, jargon, and form that it is easily imitated by members of the general population with much greater ease than in the case of art literature. In my own teaching I have confirmed that impression. Give less than *A* students folk models which are more within their range. Of course, we all know that imitation is one of the basic stages in the development of literary skill or any other skill. We also know relatively few will go beyond slavish imitation to a creativeness of their own.

Even when this "creative literature" approach was not named or sanctioned, authors of all descriptions felt themselves entitled to draw upon popular tales, beliefs, folk speech at will. But they never felt themselves under any obligation to acknowledge such sources or to refrain from altering such material in order to conceal its source. However, the folk sources of most great literature are becoming well known today. With the publication of more journals and diaries of authors, we are learning more and more of the extent to which they drew upon folk sources for their plots, their characters, their language, their music, and their songs. After all, where else than in one's environment is there for him to draw? Teachers particularly interested in this phase of folklore as more accurate scholarship should read the article in *The Saturday Review* by Dr. Ern-

est Leisy of Southern Methodist University on the folk roots of American literature. They may also be interested in Dr. Levette Davidson's article on folk elements in mid-western literature. Dr. Arthur L. Campa of the University of Denver, we are told, lectures on the folk roots of Don Quixote.

It is not difficult to recognize the folk element in the work of our great poets in this century. Robert Frost, four times winner of the Pulitzer Prize for poetry, is replete with "down East" proverbs, Yankee idiom, and New England ways of thinking. Carl Sandburg has sung up and down the land the ballads and ditties of his plain people in the American Songbag. Stephen Benet went abroad on a Guggenheim fellowship to write the Pulitzer-Prize-winning *John Brown's Body*. And with his wife, he wrote the *Ballads for Americans*, which has delighted old and young alike, and in my experience has inspired college students to attempt ballads on their own in much the same way the earlier book by the Farjeons (satirizing English royalty) is reputed to have inspired the Benets themselves. Vachel Lindsay made much use of folk characters. I might summarize by saying that my class once indentified a dozen major American poets who had featured no less than sixty-four American folk characters or heroes.

To show further the basic folk element in our great literature one might mention Washington Irving's legends of the Hudson Valley, Melville's tall tales of the high seas, Cooper's invocation of the perfect state of nature man in his idealized Indians, Longfellow's metrical treatment of Schoolcraft's folklore harvest among the Indians, and Mark Twain's superb handling of folk custom, folk speech, anecdote.

The teacher who wishes to use American folklore materials in her teaching no longer lacks for resources. There are a multitude of recordings of folksongs, quite a few recordings of folk tales. There are many folksingers on the hoof and storytellers, too. There are series of folk hero filmstrips. There are folklore maps and colorful poster pictures of the folk heroes. The reading series and literature anthologies at all levels are beginning to set aside whole sections labeled as folk tales or folklore. And finally there is the flood of books now the American heritage is being re-examined as never before in this time of crisis.

The use of folk materials is closely allied to something with which you have long been familiar—regionalism or local color in literature. It is even more closely related to that old stand-by principle in education of the utilization of local resources. In other words, the teacher regardless of her major field has to relate her teaching to the community in which she works. She has to start with students where they are. Folk beliefs, folk customs, folk speech are the basis upon which we must all build, however faulty we may feel the foundation to be. There will never be any popular support for, or enthusiasm for, art, music, literature or any of the fine arts until folks know their popular origin, know that all these art products spring from the seedbed of folk literature, folk music, and folk art. The fine arts depend for their vitality and national impact upon their solid grounding in the common man's love of beauty, need for recreation of mind and body, and exercise for his imaginative capacities.

This theory was stated much earlier

by Johann Herder, according to Constance Rourke in her epochal three-volume work on the *Roots of American Culture*. To quote her:

"Despising the polite verse of his day, he (Herder) insisted that it was to the folk rather than to literary sources to which poets must turn, and urged them to listen to the speech and the song of the peasants in the villages and farmsteads and to explore the long accumulations of such expression wherever these might found. . . . He constructed a theory as to the nature of culture, insisting that the folk-arts laid a base for the fine arts in form, spirit and expression, that folk-forms were the essential forms in any communal group and that these tended to shape and color sophisticated or conscious art even when they were not specifically drawn upon. He was concerned less with genius or the eventual masterpiece than with the texture of common experience and expression. . . . he argued that history should portray the many layers of the cultures of peoples rather than the peaks of achievement. He believed that the basic folk-cultures differed from one another and became concentrated in distinctive national patterns."

Miss Rourke says that America accepted John Fiske's theory of the transplantation of culture to this country which he called the "transit of civilization." "Theory was that if we dipped deeply and often enough into the major European streams we might hope to witness their rise among us. Culture would be achieved by means of 'carriers'—artists, writers, musicians were all 'carriers'—both those who went to Europe to study and came back and those who migrated from Europe . . . What we might hope eventually to

possess was an extension of European culture."

Obviously Miss Rourke was not satisfied with this prospect of gaining a way of life merely by importation from Europe. She insisted that we had already developed our own culture or way to live to fit the necessities of the American scene and that it would be the rankest folly to try to take over undigested foreign cultures as our own. Culture is not to be gained simply by a 'pillage of the past.'

Some students feel that the distinctive thing about our history and our folklore is that they are primarily the story of the conquest over nature rather than over human beings. Regardless of the reason why, it has been our good fortune to grow into a world power on this continent in an area largely unoccupied by other peoples in great numbers. That is, we became a great power without a long career as a ruthless conqueror of peer cultures. Consequently our folk heroes are largely good-natured work giants who conquered the forces of nature... forests, sod, rivers, deserts, mountains, and distance. Witness Paul Bunyan, John Henry, Pecos Bill, Feboldson, Johnny Appleseed, Davy Crockett, Old Stormalong, and Joe Magarac. Anything tending to teach mankind that his real foe is not other folks is of inestimable value to the hope of world peace.

Of course, I am aware that certain people in their enthusiasm for the cosmopolitan and distant will hardly recognize a thing as history if it occurs in this country, much less folklore. To those who exhibit what Dr. Theodore C. Blegen, Graduate Dean of the University of Minnesota, calls "inverted provincialism," I should like to recommend the reading of his book *Grass*

Roots History. Here are a few quotations:

"It is encouraging to see that much advance has been made in recent years in the study and appreciation of our national, regional, and home community life. As Tremaine McDowell points out, artists have recorded native manners, musicians have transcribed native rhythms, historians have explored America afresh to understand everyday life.

"This inverted provincialism considered itself urbane and cosmopolitan, it was little interested in the values of folk culture. It rejected the near-at-hand as local and insignificant. It cultivated the far-away, without fully understanding it because it did not understand the near-at-hand. Without sensing too, that the far-away may in its inner meaning be near-at-hand. Imitative because it lacked self-confidence, inverted provincialism . . . established molds and patterns . . . that have been hard to break.

"In art it sometimes scorned the ideas and expressions of native artists, forgetting that Rembrandt drew his inspiration from the near-at-hand in his native Holland and never went outside his own land, that even Cezanne, the founder of modern art, spent his entire creative life in Provence.

"In literature inverted provincialism gave small attention to the so-called regional writers, forgetting the classical writers were often regionalists, forgetting that the masterpieces of Mark Twain are his books describing and interpreting the folk culture he found at home, for in the home community and the river that he knew he found the universal. There was even a tendency to delay recognition of American writers at home until, in Conrad Aiken's phrase, they had foreign visas for

travel in America."

To return abruptly to matters of classroom teaching, you will find that the use of folklore in your classes will lead to what might be called the full cycle type of teaching. That is, the process does not end by your presenting folk ballads, rimes, or tales. The students carry these home and to the street with them and come back with variants or originals. You will soon find yourself on the receiving end as the students begin to wish to make a collection of their own, to mimeograph or print and illustrate handbooks of rimes, anecdotes, folk beliefs, folk language. There is no greater pleasure in a teacher's life to my way of thinking than to see her class suddenly come alive as a creative force.

With regard to the use of folklore in composition, I should like to call your attention to the work of the Irish Folklore Commission, a branch of their national government, which in 1938 arranged to have certain grade levels in the public schools of the land excused from formal composition requirements if they would gather folklore and record it instead. Without advocating such action elsewhere, I do think it illustrates that we may not be doing all we well might.

In an article on "Folklore as Creative Cultural Force," I have tried to show that when we study folklore as a body of knowledge it inevitably leads to a production of a new body of folk literature in folk literary forms, such as the ballad, rime, riddle, anecdote, tall tale. Hitherto many have thought of folklore as the oral literature of a primitive society in which the transmission of knowledge was largely a matter of word of mouth. But today we find ourselves in this the most advanced

technologically of all nations, but producing a new oral literature. That may be partly explained by the discovery of new mass media non-alphabetic methods of communication in which the written language is bypassed as an unnecessary middle-man. I refer to radio, recordings, television. A new age of oral literature is upon us when the great emphasis even in writing is on writing as if you were talking.

There may be some of us who have hesitated to use old folk tales, folk language beliefs because we feared that people would think it merely old-fashioned, in a day when nearly everyone wants to be scientific, realistic, and modern. In a letter in the *Wilson Library Bulletin* last November, I made the point that a literary production is not modern or realistic simply because it refers to inventions or events that have just transpired. The essential realism of literature depends upon a threefold authenticity: authenticity of folk belief, folk language, and folk customs and costumes.

In the matter of remedial reading in a previous article in this magazine, I sought to explain why folklore works so well with reluctant readers. The essential point is that reluctant readers are those who fail to make the transition from oral literature to written literature. The natural bridge between oral literature or folklore and written literature is logically enough folklore or oral literature in printed form. Again, the folklore or oral literature has high interest level with low difficulty, relatively speaking. Part of the intelligibility of folk literature results from its grounding in folk speech, folk belief, folk custom and in the

(Continued on Page 149)

Groping or Grouping?

CONSTANCE M. McCULLOUGH¹

Mabel is a great talker. We became friends a long time ago, once when her mouth was open and mine was shut. But I never feel she's wasting my time. She always makes me think. The other day she dropped in on her way from the book room, her arms laden with *We Slip and Slide* and *Down the Estuary Road*. She was steaming about something, as usual, and, as usual, she blew off to me.

"Have you written that thing for the magazine yet?" she asked. I shook my head. "Well, you ought to write about grouping and the individualized program."

"Mabel," I said, "you know as well as I do that that subject is a hot potato. Whatever I said, I'd have no friends left. Besides, I hear individualized reading programs are dying out in most parts of the country."

"Listen," she countered. "They aren't dead enough for me. You desk educators get so comfortable that you think more of winning friends than of hitting things where they need to be hit."

"But, Mabel," said I, "you don't persuade people by shooting them."

"All right, but listen to me. You think of a tactful way of saying this and you can have it free of charge."

I sometimes think there is no tactful way of saying the things Mabel thinks. But she's been so long in this business, she sees right to the heart of things. So I listened.

"We're supposed to be doing three things in the reading program," she proclaimed, pinning me with a forefinger. "There's the basal program for building

the skills, the functional for using the skills in social studies and such, and the recreational for maintaining the skills through the leisure habit of reading. Am I right?"

"Either that or all of the experts are wrong," I answered.

"Now," she said, "the recreational program is a free, individualized type of program, isn't it? Children read whatever they want. That's what we used to call extensive reading. The basal program is a systematic development of skills. We use basal readers and we go through the lessons with groups of children systematically, don't we?"

"You do," I said.

"Most people do," she corrected. "But these individualized reading people treat the basal reading like recreational reading. It is extensive rather than intensive. They are transferring one technique over into another area to mess things up. You know, it's the old pendulum swing again, overdoing one thing for a time, then overdoing another."

"If it's the pendulum, it will swing back," I suggested, trying to placate her.

"Meanwhile," she bristled, "the pendulum hits a lot of poor kids that didn't do anything wrong except try to live at the wrong time. If we were tinkering with puppets, it would be one thing; but these are *children*."

"But, Mabel," I replied, "the individualized reading people would say the same

¹San Francisco State College.

thing about your kind of teaching. They meet individual needs by having each child read what he wants to. Nobody is held back. There is no problem of motivation."

"What's the matter with them? Did they break the handle off their motivator?" she glowered. "There are some things children never learn how to read if left to themselves. And they misunderstand some things they read by themselves. For instance, the other day in one of my groups, Albert said the people in the story had had an accident. It turned out that he had read they had driven down one street and turned over on another. I wouldn't have caught that if he'd been reading mostly by himself. Some reading just has to be an intensive group experience."

"It is," said I. "In the individualized program, when several children happen to read the same thing, the teacher gets them together for a discussion."

"All right," she said, "but now, honestly, don't we have evidence that a teacher can improve the learning of words by introducing the new words first? She writes a word as she pronounces it, the children pronounce it, and then later she asks a question which makes them find the word on the chalkboard. So they see, hear, say, identify by meaning, and get a left-to-right observation of the word that they couldn't get without the teacher."

"And take another example: Don't we know from research that children need to learn to read for different purposes? And isn't that best assured by our giving the pupils things to look for on each page or in each story *ahead of time*? How could I do that in forty different directions each day?"

"And then there's word analysis. Don't

we know that it should be based upon words children know by sight? How is a teacher going to keep track of all the words different children know from the different books they are reading, to decide which technique they are ready for next? And how's she going to know whether the technique will be immediately useful? If she teaches word analysis individually, she's wasting a lot of time; and if she teaches it in groups of children who have not had a common sight vocabulary, she's probably barking up a lot of wrong trees."

"But, Mabel," I reminded her, "there is research to prove that the individualized program is effective."

"You and your research!" she scoffed grandly. Mabel has a queenly scorn when she can work it up. "The tests used in research on reading aren't comprehensive enough to measure all the good things we are doing in a systematic reading program. They just don't register the breadth and depth of skills we teach. As long as you use superficial measures you'll be proving that catch-as-catch-can programs are as good as systematic ones, but you won't convince *me* with your water-spider skating!"

"You are a deadly opponent, Mabel," I said, admiringly. The only way to survive an argument with Mabel is to admire her. You can't win. "Why are you so blooming mad about all this? Live and let live."

"That's the trouble," she confessed, "— the live and let live business. These people aren't satisfied to mess up a lot of children's reading skills, but they have to sling mud all the time telling how bad our way of doing is."

"Sling mud the way you were just doing?" I asked.

"No!" she stormed. "Sling mud that

isn't deserved. Sure, a lot of teachers group rigidly and narrowly, but that doesn't make the whole idea of grouping and a systematic program wrong. Now, in my room, for instance, do I think that my three or four achievement groups are the only way I have to individualize? No. When a few stray children from different groups need the same learning, I get them together for it, and I use the sight vocabulary of the poorest reader so everybody will know the words. When two children have one good head between them to figure out a job that's hard for them both, I let them work together. When one child knows and another doesn't, I let Number One help Number Two. And when several children are curious about the same thing, I let them investigate together, using books on their different reading levels. And when a few children have the same hobby or interest, I help them find books to read on their levels. Then they exchange ideas and make a report in our reading club or make a scrapbook or have a show to share with us. That's six different kinds of grouping I use, one for achievement level, one for special needs, one for team work, one for tutorial work by a pupil, one for research, and one for interest."

"What, no friendship grouping?" I asked.

"Friend," said Mabel, "all these groupings get people to work together, and sometimes with their friends. But is American education for the perpetuation of cliques?"

"Mabel," I said severely, "I'll wager you not only are an old-fashioned grouper. I'll bet you put the children of one cultural group together."

Mabel bristled another bristle's worth. "I put children where they are going to be happiest: where they can learn best. If they happen to be with people of their own cultural group in my achievement grouping, that doesn't mean that they work with those same people in all the other types of grouping I have. I tell you, I'm a sixty-year-old modern, so modern that I'm way ahead of all these hobby-riders who try to throw our reading program around."

She took up her readers and started out. Then she turned and gave me a special look as though she were measuring me for size.

"How'd you like me to bake a cake and bring it tomorrow?" she asked.

"Fine," I said.

"Shall I just use my woman's intuition, a pinch of this and a lump of that, or shall I use a good recipe?"

"By all means," I replied, "be systematic."

A New Look at Reading

WILLARD ABRAHAM¹

The trouble with reading instruction in many schools today is that we have deliberately set up barriers to "learning how," enjoyment, and ultimate speed and comprehension. "Deliberately" isn't too strong a word, for with a minimum of research and observation we could easily see how every day we are putting more road-blocks in the way of reading progress.

Let us take any first grade room with which we are acquainted to see whether the accusation will stand. We can not take an "average" first grade room because there isn't any such thing; it is either a) a rural, small town, or city class, b) with 20, 30, 40, 50, or more students, c) consisting of children with IQ's that run the gamut of 80 to 120 (and the odds are that there are some both higher and lower), d) with the offspring of doctors, lawyers, storekeepers, mechanics, and unskilled laborers, and e) representing homes where they have already learned to love books, where there are no books, where both parents are living together in comparative harmony, or where they are not together at all.

Looking into this room chosen from our experience or present teaching situation, we see children who talk a great deal and some who never say anything, some who have numerous friends clinging to them and others completely isolated, a few who may have seen other cities, neighborhoods, climates, and cultures and many who know only the present one, one or more who speak another language at home and the rest who have no language confusion in their backgrounds.

If we are observant—and honest with ourselves—the picture that opens before most of us represents a variety of intellect, background, abilities, and personalities, despite the same dirtiness on their feet, color of skin, or apparent sense of humor when the teacher does something intentionally or unintentionally funny. We can find similarities if we want to (and there are certainly plenty of them), but it's the differences which cause trouble for the children and for us.

After we have carefully looked at this real or imaginary class, there are a few questions which we should ask about its reading program:

1. What is the attitude of these children toward reading?
2. How ready are all of them to learn how to read?
3. Since reading is the core of the educational plan in most first grade classes, shouldn't we try to bring as much *meaningful* variety into it as we possibly can?
4. What place should grouping have in the reading program?

Those questions, and many others related to them, have been answered erroneously by some teachers who say with feeling:

"I've been teaching reading for many years and my children learn how to read. A course of study has been set up in our school (or system) which requires that all children have a sight vocabulary of a cer-

¹Professor of Education, Arizona State College, Tempe, Arizona.

tain number of words when they finish first grade, and I see to it that mine have at least that number. If they don't have them, they don't go on. I strongly feel that I'm doing them a favor by holding them back at this stage of their development rather than have them face disappointment later. Most of my children *do* learn because I concentrate on repeating words over and over again until they learn them. After all, reading *is* words, so why cloud the issue?"

Frequently the primary teacher who has not varied her technique of teaching reading in twenty or more years will justify her practices by a) isolated cases of "her children" who have gone on to make outstanding records in high school and college, b) feature articles in the newspapers which occasionally point out the poor scores children sometimes make on reading or other tests (and this teacher may conveniently assume, without evidence, that so-called newer methods are responsible), and c) the relative ease with which the youngsters in her class will breeze through a primer on which they have been constantly drilled for six or nine months, to the exclusion of all other reading materials.

But the teacher is only one element in the situation. The real crux of the problem is in the four questions asked above, and the misconceptions on which answers to them are sometimes based.

1. *Attitude of children toward reading.* If a six year old boy or girl has an older brother or sister in school, he or she generally wants to go too. That isn't always the case, but it usually is. In addition to being enthusiastic about the new experience of going to school, the six year old has

a desire to read *if* he has seen others read, had his curiosity aroused by signs on billboards and store windows, or been exposed to some of the inexpensive colored books so readily available at the corner drug store. It is obvious to most first grade teachers who still retain an enthusiasm of their own in working with youngsters that the children enter school with a desire to learn, and with a sparkle and vitality that can so often kindle the chain reaction which will result in an ever-growing sight vocabulary. They are easily stimulated, want answers, and have an eagerness for fun, play, and companionship with the other children and with their teacher, that can be encouraged and capitalized on—but that can also be suppressed so very easily. Do we really believe that learning takes place when a child enjoys an experience, and that such experiences legitimately belong in the classroom setting? If so, then how can we justify the frequency with which some of us deliberately throttle the spontaneous rhythms, the need for physical activity and socializing through conversation, and the pleasant connotations which pre-school children have of reading?

Yes, the desire to read is strong among most first graders who are *ready* to read, but how strong is that desire by the time they reach second grade, especially in view of all the pressures applied to the school-beginner during that first year? And let us skip to the fifth or sixth grade for a moment; what have the reading attitudes become of *those* children when so many studies show us that most classes on that level represent a *reading spread of five or more years?*

2. *Readiness for reading.* During recent years we have heard so much about

reading readiness that most of us are convinced of its importance. But still, if one goes into many big city and small town schools, one finds that many of the teachers and principals may talk a beautiful "line" of individual differences, and yet tenaciously stick to the idea of the six-year-old-is-in-first-grade-and-will-learn-how-to-read-and-possess-a-sight-vocabulary-of-100-words-at-the-end-of-the-year.

"It's all right to treat children differently," they may agree, "but they have to learn to read sometime, so why not all do it together in the first grade? That's where the teacher is located who is best qualified to start them off right. You *know* you can't let them go on as non-readers to second, third, or fourth grade."

If you are the one who is supposed to know something like that, you might object strenuously, stating that many children are not ready to read until they are seven, eight, or even nine years old, and if they are guided, encouraged, and given an opportunity for success in their various academic endeavors, most of them will start reading somewhere along the line. And—what's more important—they will not only catch up with where they would have been if force were applied in first grade, but pass up "their other self" as if the latter were standing still.

The relatively few school systems which are putting in primary "groups" or "levels" are giving the slow-starting child a chance to stay with his age group and also to catch up before he enters the traditional grade levels beginning in third or fourth grade. That kind of organization eliminates the misnomer of "reading problem" too often attached to a young child who just is not ready and in reality is no

problem at all, except for the one he becomes because of misinformed teachers and administrators, or over-anxious parents.

3. *Meaningful variety in the reading program.* One should expect words like these in the primers and pre-primers used in the early grades: Television, President Eisenhower, atomic bomb, Korea, rocket ship, parakeet. What about words like these in the localities where they are readily understood by children even before they learn to say them: Cactus, cotton, mountain, desert, river? A few years back Seashore insisted that six year olds had a vocabulary of close to 24,000 words, and he stated that children were being fenced in by some primers and pre-primers with their extremely limited vocabularies.

Whether or not we agree with the figure he used isn't the crucial point; the important factor is that children are tied down in many areas to a single series of readers which restrict the words to which they are exposed. If you doubt that severe limitations are being put on them, just listen to their conversations sometimes—or watch how they dramatize experiences they see on television. The richness of their reactions, of the vocabulary they use and understand, and of social relationships of which they are aware is a million miles from the "oh, oh, oh" and "run, Jack, run" which dominate so much of their first year in school.

Someone once decided that children are interested in the family, community, and world around them, in that order, and then proceeded to insist that city children were fascinated by the country and country boys and girls by what goes on in the metropolis. A few simple rules might

clarify a seriously confused picture of reading in some primary grades:

- a. Children are not interested in what they haven't experienced, and don't understand. Those periodically imposed trips of children from crowded city neighborhoods to the farm would not be missed at all if they were replaced by a tour of the nearest planetarium where they could see what the stars and planets look like. Now, that would really have meaning for them, they would agree!
- b. Some children have travelled, lived in more than one place, attended nursery schools or day nurseries. They may have been in groups far removed from the family by the time they are three or four. Their experiences have been broader than the narrowly restricted activities and vocabulary imposed on them by most of the series of readers which they are compelled to follow in the primary grades. The few words frequently repeated, uninspiring sequences (when compared to some of their own lives and those they witness on television, radio, and movies), and events foreign to their experiences may combine to erect a barrier to reading progress difficult to surmount.
- c. The class which in its entirety uses the same book, regardless of their differences in ability, interests, and background, is bound to be at least 60-70% on the wrong level. Whatever level the book is aimed at will constitute only a minority of the classroom, and the rest will either

be bored or puzzled, but certainly not satisfied.

- d. There is a definite place for the older techniques of color-word association, labelling, flash cards, and the rest—if the teacher uses them in the context of meaningful experiences and understandings of her children, realizes their individual limitations, and knows how to broaden the scope of their coverage by welding them into a whole from which children can profit. Occasionally the tremendous amount of time devoted to any one of these activities brings to mind the proverb, "Too much rattling of dishes with not enough grub."

4. *Grouping in the reading program.*

First of all, let's be clear in our thinking about grouping in general—it is not a panacea, by itself it serves no purpose, and it should be discarded entirely as a teaching mechanism unless it fits a specifically defined objective. If we agree with those statements, then we must be ready to question the magic that for some people attaches to the word "three" as it pertains to reading groups.

Some students preparing to teach were asked why they thought that they should always have three reading groups. Having no reason other than the fact that that number had been given to them, they replied that it seemed to be about right. When asked why there shouldn't be more than three, they began to smile as they answered, "That would be too many." And in their response to why fewer groups shouldn't be used, they fully realized the humor of the situation, saying, "That would be too few."

Whether there are two, three, four, or 40 groups must depend on the individuals in the class, on the skill of the teacher in working with the children in large or small groups or individually, and on the materials provided by the school and supplementary ones which the teacher is willing or able to bring into the room.

Few teachers realize that techniques of sociometry and the sociogram can help form groups that have some real basis in being formed—and using a practice of that kind is certainly a far cry from the artificially created groups of children who all use markers, take turns in reading, always stay in the same group once they are assigned to it, and gather around a teacher who unswervingly follows a manual without whose guidance she might be lost.

Groups can serve a valuable purpose if they are thought of in tentative terms, and if their number and membership are subject to change.

While understanding these four concepts—attitude toward reading, readiness for reading, variety in the program, and grouping—frequently constitutes a serious obstacle to the experienced teacher, they can create a pattern of complete frustration for young persons involved in teacher preparation in our colleges. If they are eager to be told or shown "how to teach reading" and doubt the ability of the professor who refuses to open a bag of tricks, they will enter a period of discouragement which will last until they realize that their college teacher was right, and that no one, no matter how wise, can tell you "how." A substitution for specific techniques

which may be helpful for the prospective teacher is the advice sometimes given to young newspapermen out to get their first story; in teaching reading, forget what has worked successfully for others in the isolated experiences from their own background, and concentrate on the "five W's and an H" of the children—who, what, where, when, why, and how.

The present and future teachers are not the ones most hurt, however, by their refusal to recognize the serious limitations of reading instruction in many schools and communities. It is the children who suffer most. Their parents, despite their unquestionable love and desire for the best school experiences for their children, are frequently incapable of seeing what is wrong. Having reached whatever successes they have attained on the basis of being taught to read as they were taught, they have no way of knowing what those successes might have been if more effective methods and materials had been used. One thing of which both they and the teachers can be sure is that if they are completely satisfied with the practices as they have been followed in a particular school or by a specific teacher for many years, their smugness can generally be assumed to indicate that something better is long past due!

That "something better" may be a consideration through in-service training or individual self-analysis of the four-pronged approach to the teaching of reading discussed here. A periodic review of how the "core subject" of the primary grades is handled is necessary in our continuing efforts to teach reading more effectively.

Attacking the Problem of the Retarded Reader

BETTY SAPADIN SLESINGER¹

I teach in Public School 233 which is in "Brooklyn, U. S. A." About five years ago, the principal of our school, Dr. Sigmund Fogler, decided to do something to help the "disabled" children—the retarded readers.

A staff of unusually capable and conscientious teachers had been unable to reach this "hard core" under classroom conditions. Dr. Fogler therefore decided to try the Small-Group-Remedial-Reading approach.

The establishment of this program—within the limits of our school set-up—presented a variety of problems. Through the years, and through trial and error, we have solved many of them.

This is the program we evolved:

It was obvious that those teachers who spent the full five-hour day with their classes could not be released *en masse* to do remedial reading work. However, because of over-crowded conditions in our school, the first four years are on end-to-end session. A half dozen teachers in the Third and Fourth Years, were assigned to do remedial reading from two to four times a week, each period lasting a full hour.

The children selected for this special help are retarded two or more years (in the Third Year, the retardation is necessarily less). The reading level for those in each particular group is about the same.

Children with extremely low I.Q.'s are not included in these groups. Their reading level is usually far below that of their contemporaries in these remedial groups. Also, their rate of improvement cannot keep pace with the others.

Remedial groups each contain four (this is ideal) to six children. The larger the group, the more difficult it is to maintain the intimate, personalized relationship, so necessary for success.

Groups work together for a whole year so that there is sufficient time for the cycle to be completed: first adjustment to the group situation, then the acquiring of reading-learnings, and finally, the joy of achievement, and restoration of self-esteem.

Our children are tested at the actual start of the Remedial Group work, which is usually in early October. They are re-tested in early June. The re-testing is done preferably with an alternate form of the original test.

One of the primary problems was to find suitable materials to work with. It was evident that the same basal reader with which the child had already met defeat in the classroom should not be used. The mere sight of it would make him "tense up," become antagonistic to the situation, and wallow in a sea of inferiority.

After much experimentation we finally decided on the W. P. A. Remedial Reading Booklets. They are well-graded, and are of interest to the children. The danger here is that the teacher may be tempted to rely solely on these booklets. The surprise element is necessary in the reading "menu" both for maintaining child interest, and because a variety of appeals is always beneficial.

We therefore supplement these W. P. A. Booklets with dramatizations

¹Co-ordinator of Remedial Reading at Public School 233, Brooklyn.

from simple books of plays. Children love to play-act, as naturally as they love to play.

Also, we try to supply as much experiential learning as possible. We may take a walk in the neighborhood. Perhaps we are lucky enough to see a new building going up. We watch its construction, and discuss its future. What imagination is called forth in peopling it with its future inhabitants! The children make up little stories about the house. At first they tell it orally. Then they write it, and finally illustrate it.

Furthermore, the children make scrap books, choosing the subjects of most absorbing interest to them. Contents and captions are included. The children like this. They say "Oh! Just like a real book!"

I cannot stress too strongly that the teacher's approach to each meeting with her group is not a "business-like" one. We are not dealing with facts and figures, but with disturbed, repressed, and depressed, children. Therefore, any form of free expression is a desirable achievement.

The children should feel free to tell the teacher whatever is in their hearts and minds at the moment—the funny thing that little sister said, the punch-ball game that was won yesterday, or how unfair Big Brother was to hit them "just for nothing."

The teacher listens with keenly-displayed interest. Everyone relaxes and enjoys the informal situation. Now the ground is ready for the seeds of learning.

In the intimate, personalized atmosphere of our small groups, many of the children have responded amazingly well. In the warm, friendly surroundings, their resentment has melted away, and we have been able to reach them.

We found that the children improved not only in their reading ability—enlarged vocabulary, increased eye-span, improved comprehension—but also in social adjustment. Working with others of their age who also had reading difficulties gave them the reassurance that they were not "different" from all other children—a feeling they had originally had, with its accompanying, devastating panic.

Working on their own level, in the proper atmosphere, they experienced success, and so their self-confidence was restored. They enjoyed the reading hour, and so learned to enjoy reading, and eventually, life itself.

So that it may be seen that the program had statistically measurable and gratifying results, we append a table which gives data resulting from the program during the past school year. The children were taught during an eight-month period.

Remedial Reading Program
Oct. 1952 - May 1953

	Third Year Group	Fourth Year Group
No. of Children	16	18
Average I.Q.	101	100
Range I.Q.	83 - 117	85 - 116
Average Reading 10/52	1.1	2.4
Range 10/52	0 - 2.0	1.5 - 2.9
Average Reading 4/53	2.2 - 3.4	2.5 - 4.0
Average Gain	14 months	10 months
Range, Gain	5 months - 31 months	2 to 16 months

Reading About Emotions in the Primary Classroom

BERNICE J. WOLFSON¹

Almost everyone who reads will concede, from his own experience, that some books have deeply affected his thinking and feelings. This assumption lies behind the many studies dealing with the use of reading to change attitudes and to aid in personality adjustment. For the most part they deal with individual and personal reading. However, it would seem that there might be some value in the classroom use of some stories which portray emotional experiences common to most children. These emotional experiences may be painful to the children, or may make them feel ashamed and unworthy. Perhaps, then, a sharing of experience may be helpful.

Three stories were read with this idea in mind. They are: *The Shy Little Horse* by Margaret Wise Brown; *The Bears of Hemlock Mountain* by Alice Dalgliesh; and *Boo, Who used to be scared of the dark* by Munro Leaf. At different times these stories were read orally to the class (third grade). The children were very much interested in each of them. They paid close attention; they reacted with laughter and excitement; they asked to hear more; and after the story was finished there was a constant demand for the book from the library table.

The questions asked after each story will be listed with a few of the typical responses and the attitude of the teacher.

The Shy Little Horse—What does it mean "to be shy"?

"Like if someone comes near you, you're scared and run away."

"You don't know what to say; you feel like a prisoner."

"Like if someone comes to your house; you don't know them and you're shy."

"I'm shy."

"A lady says hello to a little boy and he stays close to his mother."

They also related experiences of meeting relatives or working associates of their fathers.

The teacher's comment was that of course most people feel shy at some time. The sharing of these common experiences interested and even amused the children.

The Bears of Hemlock Mountain—Was Jonathan brave?

"He was scared; he hid under the pot."

"Not brave at the beginning; but he was at the end."

"He was brave because he went even though he was scared."

The teacher agreed that often people can be frightened and still be brave.

Boo, Who Used to be Scared of the Dark—Why are children afraid of the dark?

"You seem so alone."

"It seems as if anything can happen."

"Things look different at night."

Although this book seemed rather young for the group, about half the class admitted to being afraid at night. Again, the teacher's attitude was accepting and

¹Third grade teacher in Norwalk, Conn.

casual. Fear was shared as a common experience, and one that was not shameful.

* * *

There would appear to be a three-fold value to the classroom use of this type of material:

1. The children are interested and tend to identify with the main character, making the story a personal experience.

2. The children become aware that other boys and girls experience the same emotions they do.

3. An accepting and understanding attitude on the part of the teacher may help the children to accept their feelings too.

Other activities may be used to encourage the expression of the feelings revealed by the stories, through art, creative writing, and dramatization.

Bibliography

Averill, Esther, *Jenny's Adopted Brothers*, Harper & Bros., New York, 1952. (Jenny shares her home and master with two other cats.)

Beim, Jerrold, *Kid Brother*, Wm. Morrow & Co., New York, 1952. (Younger brothers may be a nuisance, but they can also be a great help.)

The Smallest Boy in the Class, Wm. Morrow & Co., New York, 1949. (The smallest boy may have the biggest heart.)

Beim, Lorraine and Jerrold, *Two Is a Team*, Harcourt Brace & Co., New York, 1945. (Cooperation. The two boys are pictured as Negro and white. They work together to pay for damage they did.)

Bishop, Claire H., *All Alone*, Viking Press, New York, 1953. (Cooperation. Suitable for advanced third grade.)

Brenner, Anita, *A Hero by Mistake, the Story of a Frightened Indian*, Wm. R. Scott, New York, 1953. (In spite of his fears he finds himself a hero.)

Brice, Tony, *Bashful Goldfish*, Rand McNally & Co., New York, 1938. (Timidity)

Brown, Margaret Wise (Golden MacDonald), *Little Frightened Tiger*, Doubleday, New York, 1953. (The tiger discovers that everyone is afraid of something.)

Cutler, Lin, *Peg-a-leg*, Alfred Knopf, New York, c. 1948. (What happens to a greedy cobbler. Fairy tale.)

Dalglish, Alice, *Bears of Hemlock Mountain*, Scribner, New York, 1952. (This little boy crosses over the mountain even though he is afraid of the bears.)

Earle, Vana, *My Friend Johnny*, Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co., New York, 1952. (Friendship and quarrels)

Estes, Eleanor, *The Hundred Dresses*, Harcourt Brace, New York, 1944. (Understanding others. For advanced third grade.)

Flack, Marjorie, *Walter the Lazy Mouse*, Doubleday, New York, 1937. (Walter gets into delightful predicaments because he is lazy. Children enjoy the chapter in which he plays teacher to the frogs.)

Wait for William, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1935. (William was slower and got left behind—but he got a ride on the elephant.)

Garner, Elvira, *Little Cat Lost*, Veritas Press, New York, c. 1943. (Loneliness)

- Glenn, Elsie and Morris, *Dumblebum*, Macrae Smith, Philadelphia, c. 1947. Dumblebum learns that there are scare crows all over the world like him—and they are all brothers.)
- Hader, Berta and Elmer, *Cock-a-Doodle-Do*, Macmillan Co., New York, c. 1939. (A resourceful little chick makes his way home.)
- The Mighty Hunter*, Macmillan Co., c. 1943. (Accepting responsibility)
- Henry, Marguerite, *Little Fellow*, Winston, 1945. (Jealous young colt)
- Heyward, DuBose, *The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1939. (A success story)
- Leaf, Munro, *Boo, Who used to be scared of the dark*, Random House, New York, 1948.
- McGinley, Phyllis, *The Plain Princess*, Lipincott, New York, c. 1945.
- McKean, Else (Elly), *David's Bad Day*, Vanguard Press, New York, 1949. (Jealousy)
- It's Mine*, Vanguard Press, New York, 1951. (Sharing things)
- Moore, Lilian and Adelson, Leone, *Old Rosie, The Horse Nobody Understood*, Random House, New York, 1952. (Loneliness, lack of understanding)
- Paradis, Marjorie, *Timmy and the Tiger*, Harper & Bros., New York, 1952. (Fears)
- Paull, Grace, *A Squash for the Fair*, Doubleday, New York, 1943. (Accepting responsibility. The little boy plants seeds, tends garden, and wins prize.)
- Renick, Marion, *Jimmy's Own Basketball*, Scribner's Sons, New York, 1952. (Selfishness, poor sportsmanship)
- Reyher, Rebecca, *My Mother Is the Most Beautiful Woman in the World*, Howell, Soskin, 1945. (Proverb, "We do not love people because they are beautiful, but they seem beautiful because we love them.")
- Sandeman, Howard, *Who's Afraid of Thunder*, (World We Live In Series), Sterling, 1953.
- Savage, Joan, *Hurray for Bobo*, Children's Press, Inc., Chicago, 1947. (Understanding others)
- Selsam, Millicent, *All about Eggs and How They Change into Animals*, W. R. Scott, New York, 1952.
- All Kinds of Babies and How They Grow*.
- Egg to Chick*, International Publishers, 1946.
- Will and Nicolas (William Lipkind and Nicolas Mordvinoff), *Finders Keepers*, Harcourt Brace & Co., New York, 1951. (How two dogs learn to share.)
- Williams, Gweneira, *Timid Timothy*, Wm. R. Scott, New York, c. 1944. (Timothy learns not to be afraid and also not to go looking for trouble.)
- Wilson, Jeanne, *Half Pint*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1952. (Ranch life and a plucky little boy)
- Woolley, Catherine, *Lunch for Lennie*, Wm. Morrow & Co., New York, (Lennie decides it's better to eat like a little boy rather than like a dog or other animal.)
- Schoolroom Zoo*, Wm. Morrow & Co.,

New York, 1950. (Children's fear of animals—understanding each others fears. Advanced third grade.)

David's Hundred Dollars, Wm. Morrow & Co., New York, 1951. (Understanding money value)

Zolotow, Charlotte, *The Storm Book*, Harper & Bros., New York.

Teachers' references

Bailey, Matilda, "Therapeutic Reading," *ABC Language Arts Bulletin*, Vol 1 #6, American Book Co.

Colm, Hanna, "Do Our Children's Books Meet Emotional Needs?", *Understanding the Child*, XX, 4, October 1951.

Lindah, Hannah and Koch, Katharine, "Bibliotherapy in the Middle Grades," *Elementary English*, XXIX, 7, November 1952.

Smith, Nila Banton, "Personal and Social Values of Reading," *Elementary English*, XXV, December 1948.

Witty, Paul, "Relation of Reading to Personality Development," *Keeping Reading Programs Abreast of the Times*, Ed. Gray, U. of Chicago Press Supplementary Educational Monograph #72, October 1950.

"Reading to Meet Emotional Needs," *Elementary English*, XXIX, 2, February 1952.

AMERICAN FOLK LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN (Continued from Page 135)

oral quality of anecdote, simple characterization, and swift plot development.

Some have asked why it is necessary or desirable for the schools to teach oral or folk literature when it is by definition that material handed down orally independently of the schools. Age-group segregation as a sociological change has tended to disrupt the transmission of oral literature from generation to generation. I have developed this point at length in a separate article, but the main point is that forty years ago under one roof it was not unusual to find several generations of the same family (grandparents, maiden aunts, bachelor uncles, parents, children of dif-

ferent ages). Now that grandparents live to themselves, as do maiden aunts and bachelor uncles, the family cannot afford servants, much less nurses or governesses. The parents are out working. And the children do not even play together; each has his own age group at school or in the neighborhood. This age-group segregation has been carried so far that we can no longer depend upon automatic transmission of folklore from generation to generation. And the schools end up with another problem on their hands. Not that that has not been the history of the schools in this century.

Writing Situations to Which Children Respond

GWYN R. CLARK¹

To what kinds of situations do children respond most freely in their written compositions? In 1950-51 as a part of a more extensive research project, I attempted to answer this question. I taught language arts to a group of thirty-six sixth grade students for one hour a day from September to May. During the year these children responded to twenty-one different writing situations which were not pre-determined but evolved as the year progressed. In addition, most of the children wrote voluntarily during the year a number of compositions on subjects of their own choice. I examined all these compositions in an effort to determine what kinds of writing experiences children responded to most freely.

Kinds of writing situations to which children responded

Perhaps, before I begin to give the children's reactions, it would be well to describe a few of the writing situations. Such an approach might give the reader greater insight into the kind of program carried on with this sixth grade class.

When the children came to school in the fall, many of them were eager to talk about experiences they had had during the summer. I encouraged them to tell about trips, pets, collections, family additions, fortunes, and misfortunes. Their first compositions, in which each child told something interesting about himself or his family, were simply extensions of these conversations into writing. The children shared with one another these first efforts,

many of which carried overtones of excitement, joy, sorrow, fright, etc. Their second compositions on such topics as "My Most Exciting Experience," "My Happiest Experience," "My Funniest Experience," etc. came as a natural outgrowth of this first writing.

Two compositions written by each child came as a result of assigned topics. *Dreams, Aspirations, If I Had a Million Dollars, "A Stitch in Time," "Pride Goeth Before a Fall,"* etc. were some of the ones suggested.

Several compositions grew directly out of other curriculum areas. After a science unit the children wrote giving their own explanations for or feelings about the planets. A study of the community prompted two writing efforts: an evaluation of their committee work and a report on the life and work of some person in the community whom they admired. Data for the last-mentioned composition were secured by personal interview. Still another composition consisted of each pupil's personal reaction to the visit of four foreign students.

Several times a large bulletin board was filled with gaily-colored pictures clipped from the covers and pages of *The Saturday Evening Post, Life*, etc. These pictures were first used as a focal point for class discussion and later as leads to writing. Each child wrote three compositions, either imaginative stories or personal experiences, suggested by such pictures. One time

¹Supervisor of Teacher Training, College of Southern Utah, Cedar City, Utah.

all thirty-six children decided to write a story based on an unusual picture of a grizzly bear and her two cubs. These thirty-six stories, all suggested by the same pictures yet vastly different in treatment, were bound into a book and presented to the elementary library.

The reading of such delightfully illustrated books as *Johnny Groundhog's Shadow*, *Don't Count Your Chickens*, *Wait Till the Moon Is Full*, *When It Rained Dogs and Cats*, *The Elephant's Child*, and *Stone Soup* served as springboards for still other original stories which these sixth grade boys and girls wrote and illustrated for younger brothers and sisters or for little children in their neighborhoods. Each pupil responded at least three times to this type of stimulus.

A letter from a principal of a school in Japan asking for American pen-pals for his students resulted in two letters from each of our sixth graders. Another letter was written by each child to his parents telling of his own individual progress in school.

Each child also wrote several highly personal compositions—extensions of the "chimney" idea suggested by Applegate. To help the children "dig deeply" and release "inner steam and pressure," I began one day talking very informally about things which my family did which annoyed me. It wasn't long before children were participating in the conversation, volunteering information about younger brothers and sisters who "ragged along" or "made the tears run down his cheeks so Mother'd think I was killing him." Such periods of conversation in which children talked freely were interspersed with periods in which they "wrote stories from in-

side themselves." At least three compositions were prompted by such discussions. Popular areas were "People Who Annoy Me," "My Fears," and "My Brothers and Sisters."

For their final composition the children were requested to tell how they felt about the whole school year. Such questions as these were suggested: What do you personally consider your biggest accomplishment? What events have stood out significantly? How could the school year have been improved? This proved to be one of the least successful of the children's writing experiences even though it occurred at the close of the school year. It seemed to have been hurried and to have had too little real meaning for the students.

These descriptions, while not all-inclusive, add up to the twenty-one different writing situations which each of the thirty-six children responded to in some way. They indicate something about the variety of stimulation and how writing evolved naturally as the year progressed. In addition to responding to these twenty-one situations a number of the children wrote what they called "extra stories." Fifty-four such "extra stories" on topics of the children's own choice were handed in to the teacher for reading and evaluation. Throughout the study the children were given great latitude with regard to form and complete freedom in regard to length, the only suggestions being: Does your composition adequately express your feeling? Does it say what you would like it to say? Does it satisfy you?

With this brief introduction, I'll return to my problem: To what kinds of writing experiences did the children respond most freely?

Evidence from children's sentence structure

An objective analysis of sentence length and amount of subordination, widely accepted marks of maturity in writing, indicated that children wrote longer sentences and used more dependent clauses in their highly personal writing. As compared to an overall average sentence length of 11.99 words, these sixth graders attained an average sentence length of 13.08 words when they delved deeply into their own feelings and emotions. They averaged for the year 36.6 per cent complex and compound-complex sentences; yet in their highly subjective compositions, complex and compound-complex sentences reached 48.1 per cent of the total which is, by the way, a greater per cent of complex and compound-complex sentences than is found in the writing of most adults.² The mean subordination index (per cent of dependent to total number of clauses) was 28.6; but in their highly subjective writing they achieved a subordination index of 36.2, which is slightly higher than the 36.0 which LaBrant reports for her most mature twelfth graders.³ While the evidence I have presented may not be considered conclusive since it is based on the work of only thirty-six children, yet it strongly indicates that structurally, at least, boys and girls do their best writing when they understand a subject thoroughly and feel keenly about it.

²Dorothea McCarthy, "Language Development of Children," *Manual of Child Psychology* (Leonard Carmichael, editor; New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1946), p. 527.

³Lou L. LaBrant, "A Study of Certain Language Developments of Children in Grades Four to Twelve, Inclusive," *Genetic Psychology Monographs* 14:389-98, November, 1933.

Evidence from children's actual compositions

A subjective analysis of the writing done in this class also led me to believe that when children wrote about themselves—their feelings and emotions—they responded most freely and usually achieved highest quality and interest.

Contrast, for example, the comparative interest engendered by the two compositions which follow. In the first the child has no personal involvement but writes coldly from a distance. In the second the author projects his own feeling and colors his subject with his emotional reactions.

My Father and Mother

My daddy was born in New York. My mother was born in Montana. My mother's family moved to Washington State when my mother was eight years old. She stayed there until she met my daddy on the Grand Coulee Dam in 1936. My mother met my father in the hospital at Grand Coulee Dam. They got married in 1938. I was born in 1939. We moved to California and lived there for awhile. I stayed with my grandmother while my mother and father went up the Alcan Highway. My mother came back to me when my father went to Guam. When he came back, we moved to Cedar City.

My Father and Mother

I think my parents are just tops! Sometimes they lose their tempers at me, though. Who wouldn't! My mother is quite impatient, but I wouldn't trade her for anything. My dad has a sense of humor and is always cracking jokes. For instance, when I was six months old, my dad and my brother, Tom, went around singing, "Half a birthday to you." My dad is nearly always that way, and I think he's just wonderful. I say nearly always that way because he has a bad side, too. He can yell louder than—, and loses his temper at any little or big thing. We have lots of fun together. My brother is away at school and my parents and I do a lot of fun things

together. I won't mention any of their bad points because their good points overpower their bad ones.

Notice, also, the freshness and freedom of expression evident in the following message, written by an eleven-year-old girl on the Mother's Day card she had designed for her own mother.

To My Mother

Dear Mother:

I love you very much, and I hope you love me.

I like the way you wear your hair. I like the way you look and smile all the time. I like the way you teach school and I like you for a teacher. I like the way you keep the house clean; it's never messy. I hope I will grow up to be as pretty as you.

I like you when you don't get angry at Daddy, Barry, and me. I like you when you don't cuss me for doing something wrong.

I like you very much, but I think I would love you even more if you could have a little baby.

I like the way you have raised me. I am very pleased with you. I will try to raise my children like you have raised Barry and me.

You are as sweet as the sweetest sugar lump on earth.

Your daughter,
Karen

Is there a mother who wouldn't prefer her own child's individual expression to the impersonal and often trite sentiment printed on most commercial cards?

Compare the relative vitality of the objective and subjective approach to a topic like *Fears*. Here again the child who put himself into his composition has responded more fully and with greater interest and spontaneity.

Fears

Fears are things people are afraid of. Almost everybody is afraid of something. Some people are afraid of one thing. Other people are afraid of something else. Some people are afraid of lions and tigers. Some

are afraid of mice and snakes. Some people think it's silly to be afraid. Some animals are afraid of other animals like cats and dogs. Some people are afraid of everything.

Fears

Giving a speech makes me feel terrible. Last year in Primary Conference I had to memorize a long story and tell it right in front of the whole second ward. When it came my turn to tell my story, my heart was pounding so hard that I thought it would fall right out. Sometimes I wish it had because then I wouldn't have to give any more speeches. I somehow just can't seem to remember what I am supposed to say.

Sometimes I am frightened to stay alone at night because I hear strange sounds like someone is tapping on the window. That really frightens me. My mother used to let me sleep with my sister downstairs. We would lie in bed and all at once Jean would say, "There's a bear!" I would climb under the covers and cuddle up close to her. I know there's nothing in the dark to be frightened of, but I'm still a little bit frightened anyway.

Even when writing on subjects which are normally impersonal, the children usually seemed to respond at greater length and with greater enthusiasm if they were urged and permitted to tell not only the facts but how they felt about the subject. Following is the first draft of a composition on *Pluto* written by one of my sixth grade boys and also the final draft written after he had been encouraged to inject his own thoughts into his composition. There is not doubt that the child wrote more freely in the second composition; nor is there any doubt as to the superiority of the composition into which he injected his personal reactions.

Pluto

Pluto is the planet farthest out in the solar system. It is about the next to smallest planet. Pluto cannot be seen by the naked eye. Scientists are agreed there is no life on it. They say it is sure to be cold.

A Planet Named Pluto

When I was about six or seven years old, my brothers would talk about the planets and stars. Sometimes they would talk about Pluto. When they did talk about Pluto, I thought they were talking about the dog in the funny papers. It seemed so queer that they would always talk about that dog. When I got in the fourth or fifth grade, I learned they were talking about the planet Pluto.

Pluto is the planet farthest out in the solar system. It is about the next to smallest planet. Pluto cannot be seen by the naked eye. Scientists are agreed that there is no life on it. They say it is sure to be cold. Today when I think of Pluto, I often wonder why two things so different as a dog and a planet should have the same name.

There is a certain life to writing when the pupil has identified himself with its contents which cannot be found when he writes from a distance. Examine two compositions on ancient Egypt, one written from a personal and one from a strictly impersonal standpoint.

Ancient Egypt

Egypt is in Africa. The pyramids are in Egypt. They were built by slaves. The Nile River is in Egypt. It is a long river. People farm along it. It sometimes overflows its banks.

Flying Over Ancient Egypt

One bright sunny, Sunday morning, I climbed aboard my jet time ship and started off for Ancient Egypt. It took about fifteen minutes to get there. It was just getting dark when I arrived. I saw pyramids being built and kings' faces being carved out of stone. Thousands of slaves worked hard for the king. I flew over the Nile and saw the green fields near the river. Out about eleven miles were only bare waste lands and shifting sands. I went back across the Nile and on to the pyramids again. This time I got out of my time ship and watched the slaves build. Three hours later, I climbed back into my time ship and started home. Yes, home to the good old U. S. A.!

As is clearly evident from the foregoing illustrations, the personalized approach, in addition to allowing for greater individuality, requires digestion of material, not merely regurgitation of the textbook or encyclopedia.

Often children seemed to project their own feelings, wishes, and experiences into the characters they created so that many of their made-up stories really had as their basis the experiences and emotions of the writer. Such stories seemed to have sincere emotional appeal and vitality often completely lacking in children's wholly impersonal writing. *Sue's New Toys* was written in response to a picture from a magazine. The plot is weak and there is little evidence of sincere feeling. In contrast *The Boy with Freckles*, written by a sandy-haired boy who himself had literally millions of freckles and who had probably felt the need to rise above that affliction, shows greater strength of plot and true sincerity of feeling.

Sue's New Toys

Today was Sue's birthday. She was two years old. When Sue got out of bed, her mother said two packages had come for her in the mail. One was from Aunt Mary and the other from her grandma. Sue opened them very excitedly. The first one she opened was in a red box. Off came the lid. There in the corner was a rag doll with two long braids. In the second package was a toy monkey. Everywhere Sue went that day she took her new toys because she loved them so much. When she went to bed, she put her new toys in the corner of the room and went to sleep. The toy monkey said, "Aren't we lucky to have such a good owner?"

"Yes, and I like it here," said the rag doll. "We will stay here all the time."

And they did.

The Boy with Freckles

Once there was a boy named Ted. He had millions and millions of freckles. All

his friends said he was dumb because he has so many freckles; they called him "Dumb Freckles." After a while he got so he didn't like that name.

One day they had a problem test in school. For each problem a student got right he got five points. When the test was over, the teacher checked the papers and Ted got sixty points and that was the highest score anyone could get. All the other students got less than forty-five points. The next day in band, he passed off fourteen lessons and got a chance to play and march in the junior high band. Ted had a hobby of making model airplanes. One day two boys came to see Ted's airplanes. When they first saw them, they said they were well built, but when they turned and saw his freckles, they said the airplanes were dumb and walked away. The school had a contest to see who could make the best model airplane and fly it the longest. Ted won the contest by flying his plane 24.3 minutes. The prize was ten free model airplanes. After all these tests of his ability, his friends decided he wasn't so dumb. They stopped calling him "Dumb Freckles" and began calling him Ted.

Consistently, as I evaluated my students' written work, I was convinced, by figures relating to language structure as well as by a subjective analysis of individual compositions, that students responded more freely to situations which were highly personal—where they either related personal experiences or gave vent to their own feelings and emotions. In fact, I would feel safe in saying that back of every strong

and vivid piece of writing which I received lay the personal experience or feeling of the author.

Does such a conclusion suggest teaching procedures? In the first place, perhaps, it would imply that a greater percentage of a child's writing should be concerned with his personal experiences and reactions. I feel with Alsetter that:

Schools have made too little use of self-expression—have given too little opportunity for it . . . better that the boy or girl write a simple account of what he saw on the street than that he write a collection of stereotypes on democracy.⁴

In the second place, it would seem to imply that whenever possible, children should be encouraged to use the personal approach even to impersonal material—to tell what the facts mean to them, to express their personal reactions. They should be taught to respect their own thinking and their own ways of expressing it, for "There is," as Snow says, "a certain life to writing when a child has identified himself with its contents which cannot be found when he writes from 'a distance.'"⁵

⁴M. L. Alsetter, "The First Function of English," *English Journal*, June, 1944, pp. 297-301.

⁵Rebecca Wright Snow, "Growth in Written Language Power of Children Eight Years Old," (unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, 1951), p. 42.

Functional Letter Writing

GORDON S. SALISBURY¹

In one corner of the room a group of five children were watching the filmstrip *Drilling for Oil*. Around the room at various desks other children were carefully writing business letters. Others were preparing reports from materials in their texts, from the encyclopedias, and the aids from the filing cabinet. I congratulated myself on having a meaningfully busy room of children combining social studies work and language arts.

It was all because of a little experiment which Mr. Robert Sheridan and I did last year. We were trying to think of some way that we could get more information and visual aids into our classrooms, and still keep within the limited budget provided by the school board. We finally hit upon the idea of developing a listing of free teaching aids provided by foreign countries, states in the U. S., industrial organizations, etc. We worked pretty hard locating over 2,000 organizations and sending letters to each requesting samples of their aids. The aids were then evaluated and organized under subject headings. What we had originally thought of as just a simple listing turned out to be rather a complete book.

We tried to keep in mind throughout the organization of the book that it was to be used by children. Therefore, the materials were listed alphabetically under subject headings, and cross referencing was used whenever possible. Samples of business letters were included in the introduction, so children who had forgotten the correct form, or did not know how to word

their requests would have a guide to follow. After a child locates the materials he wants and writes his letter, he then brings it to the teacher for approval. If the work is neat, and correctly done, both the student and the teacher sign the letter, thus giving his request school authority.

A few days later the child finds a package in the school mail box. I recall that last Friday two children received their aids. One envelope contained a great deal of information and many visual aids on British Columbia. The child was delighted, and as we talked about it, he mentioned three different reports that he felt he could make from these aids. The other aid was from the Samuel Higby Camp Institute for Better Posture. There were three different posters on posture, and a booklet or two on why good posture was of value. This particular girl was interested in the subject and wondered if she could get extra credit if she prepared a report on posture and presented it to the class.

It seems to me the value of activities of this type are many. Using an alphabetical listing, plus familiarity with cross-referencing, is in itself a good experience. Then a desire is created to write business letters because of the valuable materials received. Here is an opportunity to point out to a child that messy work would not get the result from the organization that he had hoped, so you, as teacher, must refuse to put your signature on work of this type. When the child receives the aids, the writing of the letter certainly has been made

¹Sixth grade teacher, Riverside, California.

meaningful. Invariably the child will want to tell the class about the materials, and here is a valuable language experience. Now that the child has his information, he is able to work out some type of a report. He has something that the other children have not been able to see, as this information has not been in a text where all the others have read it already. He is going to give the class some new information; consequently the child's attitude toward making the report is excellent. Usually this report is presented to the class; again the opportunity for language expression. Much of the material is in the form of posters, charts, maps, or even free filmstrips (which the class may keep). This usually causes the child to choose a group of children to work with him in order to report thoroughly on the information and aids.

Perhaps our school system is more generous than others, but it does provide the envelopes and stamps for the letters. Therefore, I feel that the teacher is free to ask that the aids received be left in the classroom when the particular student or students requesting them are through using them. This is also fair, as the organizations providing the aids send them with the idea that they should be shared with the class.

Our class now has a filing cabinet filled with folders. Each folder is numbered, and is arranged numerically. A little file card box is kept near the filing cabinet which lists the different items in the folders and the number of the folder containing the particular aid. Already this year we have brought into our room more information than is contained in any text book.

Whenever it is time to write compositions, do social studies work, or even to do free reading, I find a group of students waiting to use the filing cabinet.

Actually, the use of letters requesting free aids is not restricted to the English-language part of the school program. We have materials from publishing houses, not only on how to use a dictionary, or how to become a better reader, but also on the different processes in arithmetic, how to use the scientific methods in school, how to improve writing, safety procedures on the schoolground, why we should see Brazil, filmstrips on petroleum prospecting, refining and transportation, and a million and one other subjects. All of it was free, and all of it was requested and obtained by the students, and because of particular personal interest in a certain subject. Usually the materials were incorporated in some kind of a report or paper.

I cannot recommend too strongly the use of free teaching aids. There are many little pamphlets and books listing the organizations providing these free materials. Let me recommend that you get one which lists the materials under subject headings, and one that is organized so that the students can do the requesting.

The work I have done with the program thus far has not been extensive enough to make me an expert in the field, but if teachers have questions regarding some aspects of the program, or want advice concerning the initiating or use of a program of this type, write me at P. O. Box 943, Riverside, California. I shall be happy to help in any way possible.

Teaching Procedures for Spelling Disabilities

EDNA LUE FURNESS¹

The vagaries of English orthography, which have baffled not only foreigners but also persons born to the language, are easily explained by the history of the English language. Many Greek and Latin loan words, such as *bona fide*, *alibi*, *analysis*, *comma*, *atlas*, retain their original spelling. Numerous Old French words, e.g., *piece*, *example*, *chime*, have retained their medieval spelling and often their pronunciation. Also worthy of mention are the words of Anglo-Saxon origin, such as *cow*, *sheep*, *calf*, *swine*, which the Normans retained even though they changed the spelling. Finally, vagaries are due to the efforts of the eighteenth century writers such as Dr. Johnson, Swift, and Priestley, who were inconsistent about their own spelling, but who nevertheless directed their efforts toward uniformity in spelling.

Be the history of the English language as it may, it is of little solace and service to boys and girls in their efforts to spell correctly. The situation is even more complicated by the fact that young people of this epoch are called upon to spell more than were their grandmothers and grandfathers.

Objectives in spelling

According to a statement made by the National Committee on Spelling in the Fourth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association, the teaching of spelling should aim:

1. To make automatic the accepted sequence of letters in words most common-

ly needed for expression of thought in writing.

2. To develop the meaning and use of words to be spelled.

3. To develop what is termed a "spelling consciousness," that is, the ability to recognize almost instantly the correct and incorrect spelling of words.

4. To develop a "spelling conscience."

5. To develop a technique for the study of spelling.

Relationship of skills in reading and spelling

Learning to read and spell are closely related, and it is a question as to how much growth in either can be hurried up through the pressure of school lessons and assignments alone. The failure of writing and spelling to keep pace with reading can in fact be a source of difficulty, retardation, and even of frustration in the case of reading exercises which demand writing.

It is not, perhaps, very important that a pupil know the letters before he begins to read. He may learn first to read words by seeing them, hearing them pronounced, and having their meanings explained and illustrated. Afterwards he may learn to analyze words by naming the letters composing them. The place for the alphabet process is after the pupil has made his start and is well on the road to reading. Writing and spelling enter at this stage and further promote the cause of word analysis.

The reading process, Kottmeyer states, is the direct reverse of the spelling process.

¹Associate Professor of English Education, University of Wyoming.

In reading we proceed from the written form of a word, to its spoken form, to its meaning. In spelling we are concerned first with the meaning, and lastly with the written symbol representing that word. In either case it is necessary to understand the way in which letters function to form a word or linguistic symbol.

Phonics are fundamental in good spelling, though we have many unphonetic spellings, and certain sounds are represented or spelled in different ways. The fact should be kept in mind that the phonics of spelling are different from the phonics of reading. For example, "sh," as seen in print, or writing, has only one pronunciation. If the sound of "sh" is given, it may be spelled "sh," "si," or "ti." Hence overemphasis on phonics in spelling can be detrimental to the pupil's progress. The reader may be reminded that it is phonetically possible, by analogy with familiar English words, to spell *fish*, *g-b-o-t-i* (*gb*

as in *rough*, *o* as in *women*, *ti* as in *nation*).

Although spelling has occupied a considerable portion of the time allotment in public schools, investigations have charged that the results have been poor. However, this inefficiency does not seem to be a recent matter, as some of the lay critics would lead us to believe. Nevertheless, research does show a deplorable falling-off in current high school spelling ability and the facts indicate the need for a better spelling program. The following analysis is an attempt to present in convenient outline form an over-all picture of spelling difficulties which may be present at any level, elementary, secondary, and college. The possible causes for such disabilities are noted. Obviously, some of the teaching procedures suggested are more appropriate for the elementary level; others are more suitable for the secondary and college levels.

An Analysis of Spelling Disabilities, Causes, and Teaching Procedures²

Disabilities	Causes	Suggested Teaching Procedures
<i>Physiological</i> Visual defects	Defective visual imagery such as: hyperopia, myopia, astigmatism, aniseikonia, strabismus, exophoria. Lack of visual memory.	Study configuration of words. Establish habits of observing and examining words, letter by letter. Use colored crayons on the blackboard in varied ways. Divide the words into syllables in the oral and visual presentation. Emphasize the difficult parts of the word. Write in letters missing in a word. Underscore the difficult parts of words. Recall the visual image of the word. Write the word. Compare with correct form.

²The author wishes to express her appreciation to Dr. Gertrude Boyd, who read the manuscript and offered several suggestions.

Disabilities	Causes	Suggested Teaching Procedures
Auditory defects	Unable to hear many sounds. Unable to discriminate between similar sounds. Unable to discriminate between different sounds. Does not understand or follow directions. Has such disabilities as: speech and articulatory defects, mispronunciation, difficulty in auditory learning and phonetics.	Give a hearing test. Associate printed letter with a situation in which sound is used with a pictured object which begins with that letter. Write words large with crayon or chalk, then ask pupil to trace word with a forefinger saying each part as he traces it. Say the word slowly, emphasizing the separate syllables of the word. Have pupil write the word large, say the word. Have pupil look at the word and pronounce it. Show the relation between the sound and the written symbol.
<i>Psychological</i> Emotional maladjustments	Emotional problems characterized by: frustration, insecurity, restlessness, excessive timidity, negative attitude, fear of failure, lack of confidence, tension in home or school, parents' indifference to pupil's work, distaste for spelling, speech disorders, frustration because writing vocabulary lags behind speaking and reading ability.	Confer with parents. Look for physical causes of emotional maladjustment. Remove pressure, jealousies, fears, and worries. Provide a permissive atmosphere. Show words taught are needed. Limit words to those which pupil is unable to spell. Emphasize individual and class progress. Encourage pride in achievement.
Lack of spelling readiness	Mental and physical immaturity. Muscular incoordination. Lack of language facility. Unable to perceive differences in sounds of letters and syllables. Unable to recognize differences and similarities in words. Few opportunities for social development. Lack of ability to follow directions. Short attention span. Unable to do abstract thinking. Lack of sight vocabulary. Lacks curiosity about words, their meaning, and use. Does not recognize purpose for writing. Lacks desire to express himself in writing.	Train eye to move left to right. Provide a rich reading program. Provide rich background of experiences. Plan trips. Discuss pictures, stories, and auditorium programs. Print names of possessions. Send greeting cards on special occasions. Make labels and captions. Print title for homemade booklets. Compose original stories. Write notes and letters for special occasions. Use a wall or desk chart showing the alphabet. Use a picture dictionary with primary children. Encourage correspondence with friends or relatives. Keep a diary. Make a scrapbook. Spell names of relatives, pets, friends, states. Write several words from dictation. Write own name without a model.

Disabilities	Causes	Suggested Teaching Procedures
<i>Instructional</i> Defective perception of word form	Defective vision. Eye movements irregular. Failure to grasp whole word. Inadequate instruction in perceiving word forms. Faulty work habits. Low mentality. Too few associations of meaning. Limited skill in word analysis. No meaning association with word form. Lack of analytical ability. Uncertainty about sequence of letters.	Match words and meaning. Match parts of words that are alike and point out differences (<i>place, plate.</i>) Use dictionary to study words. Discuss, explain, and define words. Use homonyms in sentences.
Faulty pronunciation	Speech impediment. Acquired from teachers or associates. Lack of attention to form of word. Dialectal pronunciation. Carelessness. Poor enunciation. Foreign language or slovenly speech in home. Illiterate home.	Set an example by using good enunciation and pronunciation of word. Ask pupils to listen to radio announcers and movies for pronunciation. Explain phonic irregularities. Make certain the pupil pronounces words carefully, distinctly, and by syllables. Write the word.
Defective word recognition skills	Inability to give sounds of letters and blends. Incomplete observation of words. Failure to notice sound elements that make up words. Unable to give number of parts or syllables in word after hearing word said or seeing it written.	Teach prefixes, suffixes, and roots. Observe word as a whole. Detect syllables, phonograms, and double letters. Identify words through picture clues, configuration clues, context clues, phonetic analysis, structure analysis, syllabication and the dictionary. Recognize the vowels in a word.
Omission of letters, or wrong use of letters	Faulty pronunciation. Poor or careless hearing. Poor vision. Nervousness. Excessive ambition. Inattention. Ignorance of letter sounds. Lack of techniques in attacking words. Phonetic inadequacy. Uncertainty of vowel sounds and vowel combinations.	Check vision. Reorganize pupil's method of attack. Drill on auditory sounds. Use initial blends. Combine and blend sounds in a total word. Stress word meaning.
Inaccuracy due to carelessness	Poor vision. Nervousness. Lack of interest. Lack of pride in spelling accomplishment.	Correct physical defects. Create attitude of caring about spelling. Encourage pride and cooperation in spelling achievement. Provide definite method of learning. Emphasize individual and class progress. Insist on careful spelling in all written work and correct all spelling errors.

Disabilities	Causes	Suggested Teaching Procedures
<i>Instructional (cont.)</i> Lack of spelling practice	Decreased emphasis on spelling. Lack of well-planned spelling program. Emphasis on words already known. Presentation of unnecessary words. Lack of integration in spelling activities.	Motivate practice on basic words. Encourage wider reading. Develop vocabulary by conversation. Teach words the pupil needs to know. Teach earliest the words most commonly used in correspondence. Teach in appropriate grades words needed in other subjects.
Illegible writing	Deficient in speed and quality of handwriting. Older pupils especially sensitive about inability to spell.	Insist upon legible handwriting. Bring errors into open. Stress care in formation of letters and words. Stress correct spacing of letters and words.
Lack of meaning vocabulary	Immaturity. Limited vocabulary.	Study prefixes, suffixes, roots, word derivation, inflection of verbs, adjectives, antonyms, synonyms, and homonyms. Note new words in reading. Use dictionary generously.
Lapses	Inversion of letters. Doubling the wrong letter. Substituting letter or letters of like or approximate phonic value (<i>grate</i> for <i>great</i>). Influence of another language.	Give closer attention to sequence of letters. Point out phonetic values of the letters transposed. Study words ending in silent e. Distinguish between long and short vowels preceding a final consonant.
Attempt to spell phonetically	Overconscious of phonetics. Tries to spell by analogy.	Give drill with word families (<i>importance, existence</i>). Develop visual familiarity with varied spellings for the same sounds (<i>sede, ceed, cede</i>).
Misuse of apostrophe	Lacks knowledge of the concept of possession. Fails to distinguish between singular and plural. Carelessness.	Show application of rules to spelling words. Check all written work to see whether rules are applied.

Bibliography

- Ayer, Fred C., "An Evaluation of High-School Spelling," *School Review*, 59: 233-6, April, 1951.
- Boyd, Gertrude, *Remedial Techniques for Reading Difficulties*. Laramie: Bureau of Educational Research and Service, University of Wyoming, 1949.
- Brown, Corinne B., "Teaching Spelling with a Tachistoscope," *English Journal*, 40: 104-5, February, 1951.
- Burton, Dwight L., "Spelling Can Be Taught to High-School Students," *School Review*, 61: 163-7, March, 1953.
- Davis, Georgia, "Remedial Work in Spelling," *Elementary School Journal*, 27: 615-26, April, 1927.
- Dolch, Edward William, *Better Spelling*. Champaign, Illinois: Garrard Press, 1942.
- Fernald, Grace, *Remedial Techniques in Basic School Subjects*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1943.

(Continued on Page 172)

Creative Drama Place Exercises

LOUISE HOVDE MORTENSEN¹

As a student in Portia Boynton's Creative Drama Workshop at Drake University last summer, I learned her technique of making the scene real. Ten teenagers demonstrating creative drama techniques turned the little theater into a woodsy picnic ground, a wintry blustering bus stop, a raucous carnival midway.

Miss Boynton's system of acting is based on the five senses. Always ask yourself: What do I see? What do I hear? What do I taste? What do I touch? What do I smell?

This creative work will carry over into formal drama if the students have learned to adapt it. When Huck Finn does the graveyard scene in *Tom Sawyer* he must hear the night noises, feel the grass under his feet, see the moon and clouds, smell the night odors. His involuntary muscles will all react so that the audience will hear, see, and smell with him. When he listens, his whole body will show fear.

Six weeks of place exercises are needed before ever starting to dramatize a story.

A pioneer place exercise is a night scene on the prairie. The children see dimly in the darkness, they smell the hot dry air, they hear the sounds—Indians in the distance, the oxen and horses disturbed in their sleep. They touch the wheels of the big wagons, they taste a cup of water.

Another pioneer exercise is a story from Miss Boynton's grandmother who, when keeping house in Western Nebraska, had just finished making hot pumpkin pies when an Indian came to the door and pointed to the pies. Grandmother made

gestures showing they were hot, but the Indian insisted on taking a pie. And then how he danced around when the hot pie burnt his mouth.

Believe it's Christmas time. It's snowing and cold; time for the stores to close; hear the bells, feel the snow; see the Christmas trees in the windows.

On a picnic in a pine woods the children smell the pine and feel the rocks and leaves under their feet; they hear the birds, drink the cool water in the brook, and touch the bark of trees.

As it was a hot summer day during the workshop week, Miss Boynton, who says the teacher should take an active part with the children, passed a tray (imaginary) of ice cold glasses around, and we drank from the cold, dewy glasses and swallowed the drink which cooled us off (even though imaginary).

In the class the place exercises are first done with the entire group, then with eight, then with four, then with two, and then with one. She never starts with individual performances.

Not until place has been established does Miss Boynton go into characterization. When she does, she thinks of a particular character, how he looks, where he lives, who his friends are, how he dresses, what he does for a living.

The goal in all the place exercises is to make them believable. Believe and share are the two words we took away from the Workshop.

¹Des Moines, Iowa.

Interrelationships between Listening and Other Language Arts Areas

ALTHEA BEERY¹

Within recent years beginning attempts have been made to investigate problems centering around listening and its relationships to other phases of language development. These relationships have been summarized by other writers (5, 34, 45). In this article reference will be made to representative studies from research whenever their findings are known to the writer. In addition to such references, certain probable parallels and differences will be stated as points worthy of classroom exploration and validation by research.

General components of language

Common to listening, speaking, reading, and writing are certain fundamental elements of language. Among these are vocabulary, sentence patterns, organization of ideas, and adjustment to the function of language in any particular instance (the giver and receiver of language attempt to reach each other).

Since these elements of language are present in any instance of its use, it is not surprising that many identical or similar psychological processes will be involved whatever the form language takes. Positive relationships among the various language arts are to be expected; studies frequently show that lack of competence in one phase of language hinders growth in other areas.

Language involves not only physical action—the use of the eyes, ears, and voice—but also intellectual activity. In fact, the ability to use language, the unique possession of man, keeps pace with mental development. The close relationship between language and thought is borne out by research. Correlations of intelligence with listening, for example, range from *r.* of .27 (40) to *r.* of .56 (32).

This close relationship between the higher

mental processes and all phases of language indicates that improvement in each should be sought primarily through helping the learner deal with ideas rather than through focusing too narrowly on mechanical techniques. Psychologists do not find any appreciable difference between modes of sensory presentation (74).

To be sure, language is a learned response (77, 78). Without nurture it does not flourish. A favorable environment, first-hand experiences, and appropriate guidance are all essential, especially during the years before school entrance and throughout the elementary school. No set of circumstances, however, will enable a child to speak or read more maturely than his developing mind can deal with abstractions or with the relationships between ideas.

Listening and spoken language

Listening precedes speaking with the infant, and the quality of speech which the child comes to use depends upon the speech he hears (47). The normal child picks up speech more or less unconsciously under the informal tutelage of family living. The fact that twins are retarded and only children accelerated in speech development (47) must be attributed in a substantial degree to the speech patterns they most frequently hear. The deaf child learns to speak only with special instruction. His sentences are shorter and lack the subordination of ideas of the hearing child (31).

Because of what he listens to, the speech of the child reflects the vocabulary, the usage level, and the sentence patterns of home and neighborhood. (81) During early years his ability to understand spoken language outstrips

¹Supervisor of Elementary Education, Cincinnati Public Schools.

his ability to use it. The child of fifteen months may still be using one-word sentences, such as "milk," at the time he is able to understand and respond to the request, "Give mother your dish." New words, new expressions, new sentence patterns take on meaning as the child listens to them repeatedly, now in this situation, later in another. The development of spoken language is reviewed in several sources (19: 79ff, 68, 73, 77, 78).

In a real sense listening and speaking are reverse sides of the same coin. One speaks to a listener; one listens to a speaker. Each type of oral language situation imposes responsibilities on the audience, some general and some particular. The oral situations which children meet during the elementary school have been analyzed empirically to discover the listening skills each requires (7). Improvement in listening skills results in improvement in speaking (1, 16, 37, 49).

Listening is especially valuable in the elimination of usage errors. In fact, Smith (68:85) states that *sound* is the most potent factor in improving usage. Listening to a playback of his speech enables a child to identify pronunciation difficulties or poor speech habits and serves as a motivation for improvement. Speech authorities stress the importance of teaching children to listen more attentively to sounds as an essential step in learning how to improve in articulation (78).

While the writer knows of no specific research on the point, listening to stories and poems told or read has long been advocated as a means of increasing the child's vocabulary and familiarizing him with desirable language patterns. Teachers can cite many examples of phraseology picked up in this way and later reflected in the child's conversation. Moreover, listening to oral presentations is the best way to secure response to the emotional content of literature (1).

What children listen to must be appropriate. Park (57) found that the sound motion pictures

from which children learned the least were those with long sentences and a heavy vocabulary burden.

Obviously, what a child can listen to intelligently, increases in complexity with his growing powers. The Flesch and other readability formulas have been applied to material presented orally (15, 17, 24). Most attempts to measure "listenability" have involved older children and adults. In general, at the lower levels, readability measures underrate the child's ability to listen; from approximately seventh grade and above, they overestimate the child's ability to understand speech. For example, material that measures tenth grade in readability is about twelfth grade in "listenability" (15, 17).

Much of the research on the effect of speech on the listener has been carried on with high school pupils and adults, but it has implications for elementary teachers. Dietrich (23) found that conversational delivery produced a greater shift in attitude among college listeners than what he termed "dynamic" delivery. According to another study (28) the prestige of the speaker influenced to a significant degree the effectiveness of a persuasive speech.

In a study at the college level (40) it was found that good speakers produced a greater amount of recall than did poor speakers. Furthermore, speaking accompanied by visual aids produced better immediate recall and had a slight advantage in delayed recall. Variation in rate of delivery affects recall (26, 51). Students remembered more from a radio newscast when presented slowly, though their preference was for a faster rate (51).

Harrell (29) in a study of the radio news listening of adults found that the content of the newscast influenced memory. Content dealing with human interest topics, spectacular events, local events, public affairs, and name items in the news were remembered in the order named.

Presumably, both what children are willing to listen to and what they talk about are related to their interests. If so, Baker's study (6) of

discussion topics in the elementary school will offer leads as to suitable material for children's listening. Thus, in all probability, the younger the child, the more immediately the material presented should be related to his personal experiences and concerns. Sterner (72) found that it was the content of the material, rather than the medium which influenced adolescent choices of books, radio, or movies.

Listening and reading

The bulk of the research concerning the relationship of listening ability to other language skills has centered around its effect on reading ability. Some of the relationships which have been studied are: the relative effectiveness of reading and listening as modes of learning; reading and listening vocabulary; reading and hearing comprehension and retention; and common and differential factors in reading ability and listening ability.

Listening as a mode of learning. Ability to read, speak, and write is related to listening in one important way: instruction in these areas is given for the most part orally. Consequently, the pupil who has learned how to listen effectively has a decided advantage over the pupil lacking such skill. Wilt (79) found that children are expected to listen in school on the average of two and one-half hours daily. The teachers involved in her study were unaware, for the most part, of the listening needs of children; tended to do most of the talking; and gave little attention to helping children learn to listen better.

Of necessity, listening is the chief mode of learning in the early school years during which children are learning to read. Throughout the primary grades they find listening a far better way than reading to gain information. Although this advantage lessens during the later elementary grades, children can learn more through listening and remember it better than through reading until they reach the sixth or seventh grade (36, 63, 82). Moreover, listening is the

mode of learning preferred by retarded readers. (64). The lower the reading ability, the greater the advantage listening has (4, 26, 44).

Even though listening is more effective at the elementary level for learning than is reading, investigations show that children get a relatively low proportion of the facts in a single oral presentation. (82) It is apparent that improvement in ability to listen is essential, especially when the proportion of out-of-school time children spend in listening is considered (18, 55, 56, 60).

Although teachers have always depended heavily on direct oral presentation, Wilt's study (79) indicates that teachers are unaware of the amount of time children listen in school. She rightly points out that children should have more opportunity to learn by listening to each other (80).

Hearing and reading vocabulary. Comprehension of the spoken word is positively related to comprehension of the printed word. It is for this reason that, in the beginning years, vocabulary in readers is limited largely to words in the oral vocabulary of children. Learning to recognize words is more easily accomplished when the words met in reading are in the listening and speaking vocabulary (33). That unfamiliarity with a comprehensive spoken English vocabulary is associated with difficulty in reading is borne out by several studies (42, 48, 65).

Working with college students, Anderson and Fairbanks (4) found a correlation of .80 between reading and hearing vocabulary. Not all of this should be attributed to listening, for they conclude that apparently "vocabulary ability is a general function which, on the average, operates independent of the mode of presentation of the material." Their investigation revealed that pupils who fall in the lowest 15 percent in general reading ability scored higher in hearing vocabulary than in reading vocabulary.

Hildreth (34) reports a study of Good-

enough (27) in which she found a correlation of .79 between ability to understand and explain words on the Stanford Binet vocabulary test, presented orally, and reading ability. It is hard to determine, however, the proportion of the word meanings which were acquired through listening; many of them may have been learned through reading. Krawiec (41) found visual superior to oral presentation in learning vocabulary at the college level.

Schonell (65: 173 ff) rates weakness in auditory discrimination of speech sounds as one of the most important and most frequently occurring causal factors in poor reading. He also found that in most cases of retarded readers with deficiency in speech, the difficulty was due to a lowered power of auditory discrimination rather than to organic conditions. Monroe (48) has found that poor readers fail to distinguish between such words as *pin* and *pen*. Bond (11) and others have found lack of auditory discrimination related to poor reading achievement; Reynolds (59), however, did not find auditory abilities related significantly to reading achievement. Since it is through listening that the child learns to discriminate between similar speech sounds, training in listening would seem to serve as a prerequisite to word recognition and spelling, at least of those words in which the letters match speech sounds.

Recent studies of children's vocabulary have shown that earlier estimates were much too low (66). The extent to which the listening vocabulary outstrips the reading vocabulary during the early elementary grades is one measure of the advantage of listening for learning during these years.

Hearing and reading comprehension and retention. A number of studies have compared hearing comprehension with reading comprehension. As a result of his study of factors associated with reading readiness, Gates (25) found that the ability to listen to a story and supply a reasonable ending was the best single predictor of success in learning to read.

Hearing comprehension and reading comprehension are highly related. Correlations range from *r.* of approximately .60 (44, 67) to *r.* of .78, (26) .80 (82) and .82 (44). According to Young (82) intermediate children who do poorly in comprehending through reading do poorly in comprehending through listening. In his study no child was found to be in the highest quartile in one mode and in the lowest in the other.

Listening is related more highly to getting the main ideas than to remembering details (9, 69). There is some evidence that listening is more effective than reading in producing a change of attitude, though Lowdermilk found reading superior for this purpose, and the use of both together superior to either alone (46).

With more difficult materials and increased reading ability, studies in high school and college show rather uniformly that reading has the advantage in immediate recall (14, 20, 44, 52, 61, 62). There is a tendency, however, to remember longer what is heard than what is read. In several studies, after a lapse of time, listening was equal to or superior to reading (14, 20, 41, 61, 62, 70). DeWick (21) in a study of the effectiveness of advertisements, found auditory superior to visual presentation in both immediate and later recall.

Factors involved in reading and listening. Comparisons of the reading process with listening have been made by several writers (7, 30). Anderson (2) and Artley (5) list needed research in the further analysis of the process of listening. Apparently listening and responding to an oral test can be used to measure learning as effectively as can reading (12).

Studies of the basic abilities involved in reading and listening give further proof of the interrelationships between them. In an analysis of factors basic to the reading process, Langsam (43) identified four significant ones: (a) a verbal factor involving interpretation of ideas; (b) a perceptual factor involving facility in perceiving detail; (c) a word factor involving

fluency in dealing with words; and (d) a factor, which she called seeing relationships, concerned with logical organization and selection of pertinent ideas. Brown (15) secured from experts in the field consensus on five basic abilities as significant factors in listening. They comprise ability to: (a) synthesize the component parts of speech to discover the central idea or ideas; (b) distinguish between relevant and irrelevant materials; (c) make logical inferences about what is heard; (d) make full use of contextual skills; and (e) follow without loss a fairly complex thought unit. Brown found that the best test for discrimination between good and poor listeners is the ability to use contextual clues. Similar analysis of the components of the listening process have been made (15, 16, 54, 58).

Nichols (54) reports that in addition to intelligence and reading comprehension the factors influencing listening most significantly include recognition of correct English usage, size of the listener's vocabulary, ability to make inferences, ability to sense the organization of spoken material, and interest in and emotional attitude toward the topic. According to students' reports, poor listeners listen for specific facts, good listeners for main ideas.

One of the difficulties in studying the relationships between reading and listening has been the lack of instruments to measure listening ability. Durrell's Test of Reading Capacity, published by the World Book Company, is a pioneer attempt at the elementary level. Betts (8) suggests an informal way of using graded reading materials for this purpose. Several attempts to build a diagnostic test for listening have been reported in the literature (9, 15, 69).

Advantages of relating listening and reading. It is obvious that listening and reading are intimately related, and that improvement in one will result in improvement of the other. Both are concerned with receiving ideas from others. Restricting elementary children to learning through reading will limit the information they

receive, partly because the skill of reading is imperfectly developed and partly because children can get more from an oral presentation in which gesture, voice, emphasis, and facial expression aid in comprehension. Conversely, if children are to grow in ability to listen effectively to material of increasing difficulty, their understanding vocabulary must be developed beyond that commonly used in daily living. Reading, accompanied by discussion, promotes such growth. Unless reading is preceded, accompanied, and followed by discussion for children to hear and participate in, vocabulary learned in reading does not become usable for children, especially those from homes in which a foreign language is spoken (75).

Listening and written language

There has been little exploration of the relationship between listening and written composition. Some of the elements important in children's writing are obviously affected by previous listening experiences. "Sentence sense," that persistent problem in all written work, depends not only on orderliness of thinking and general language maturity but also on the extent to which the child's ear is attuned to the customary ordering of words in English sentences.

To the extent that spelling errors occur because of wrong sound images of words, better listening will reduce spelling errors, at least of those words in which the letters match the sounds.

Since there is a positive relationship between skill in listening and skill in oral language, the establishment of a relationship between ability in oral and written expression presumably would reflect the indirect influence of listening on the writing of children. Teachers have found, in general, that children who express themselves well orally tend to excel in written English. The reader is referred to the articles by Miss Townsend and Miss Dawson in this series for studies of such relationships. It was noted previously that the lack of listening

experiences on the part of deaf children resulted in more immature sentences (31).

It has long been a truism that vivid impressions must precede effective expression. A recent course of study gives examples of sensory experiences, including records of interesting sounds and spoken language, to be used as preparation for more vivid writing (10). Similar practices are suggested in an article in a recent article by Treanor (76).

Schonell (65) found the following correlations of written composition with other aspects of language: with vocabulary .54; with sentence sense .52; with English usage .45; with reading comprehension .50; with spelling .48; with amount of reading .33. While Schonell did not investigate the relationship between listening and the ability of children to write compositions, several of these correlations probably reflect ability to listen. He found that 39 per cent of his subjects who were deficient in written expression, as compared with 12 per cent of his control group, came from poor home backgrounds. These children were frequently deprived of rich experiences out of which might come topics for writing. They did not hear interesting conversation at home and they had few close friends.

Listening to and commenting on the stories and letters which classmates have written encourage written expression because such practices furnish an audience, a needed incentive for writing. Reading one's own writing aloud is sometimes advocated as a means of discovering incomplete sentences, lack of subject-verb agreement, lack of clarity, and awkward phrasing. Listening plays its part as the teacher corrects the child's work with him in a face-to-face situation. The teacher's interest is in what the child has written; their mutual concern is to express clearly the ideas the child had in mind (73).

The improvement of listening

Guidance in listening has not been given the

place in school that its importance in the development of language power and the extensiveness of its use in daily living warrant (3, 19). It cannot be assumed that children naturally learn how to listen. In fact, studies show that without instruction there is little improvement in listening from junior high school through college (13).

There is evidence that pupils can be taught to listen more effectively (13, 24, 39, 48). In one situation high school students computed their listening scores for a series of lessons; on a second similar series they made notable improvement (10). Experiments at the college level have led to measurable improvement of listening (32, 39).

Several writers have analyzed the various types of listening and have given suggestions for appropriate guidance for the development of each (22, 35, 50, 53, 71). Descriptions of classroom practices are beginning to appear in the literature. Jacobs (38) has described a radio unit carried on with eighth-grade pupils which is suggestive.

Space does not permit the inclusion here of any extensive analysis of the process of listening, nor of the development of standards for successive levels of listening. The sequence in language growth from listening to speaking to reading and finally to writing seems clear. Although listening is first in the cycle, it does not lose its importance as other facets of language development emerge. They, in turn, contribute to listening ability in a kind of circular interaction in which each profits from the others and strengthens them.

Finally, it should be remembered that growth in language power cannot run ahead of the rate at which the child matures. Ability to understand, speak, read, and write involved sentences is dependent on a mind that can see the relationship between ideas. Experiences and social interaction are equally necessary to build concepts and give purpose to language. The interrelationships among the language arts point

to the need for a school program that teaches them in harmony with each other and with the larger purposes which language serves in the development of the individual and his relationships with others.

Bibliography

1. Adams, Harlen M., "Teaching the Art of Listening," *Nation's Schools*, XXXIV (November, 1944), 51-2.
2. Anderson, Harold A., "Needed Research in Listening," *Elementary English*, XXIX (April, 1952), 215-24.
3. Anderson, Harold A., "Teaching the Art of Listening," *School Review*, LVII (February, 1949), 63-7.
4. Anderson, Irving H. and Fairbanks, Grant, "Common and Differential Factors in Reading Vocabulary and Hearing Vocabulary," *Journal of Educational Research*, XXX (January, 1937), 317-24.
5. Artley, A. Sterl, "Research Concerning Interrelationships Among the Language Arts," *Elementary English*, XXVII (December, 1950), 527-37.
6. Baker, Harold V., *Children's Contributions in Elementary School General Discussion*. Child Development Monographs, No. 29. Teachers College, Columbia University, 1942.
7. Beery, Althea, "Listening Activities in the Elementary School," *Elementary English Review*, XXIII (February, 1946), 69-79.
8. Betts, E. A., *Foundations of Reading Instruction*. New York: American Book Company, 1946.
9. Blewett, Thomas T., "Experiment in the Measurement of Listening at the College Level: Abstract of Dissertation," *Journal of Educational Research*, XLIV (April, 1951), 575-85.
10. Board of Education of the City of New York, *Developing Children's Powers of Self-Expression through Writing*. Curriculum Bulletin, 1952-53 Series, No. 2.
11. Bond, Guy L., *The Auditory and Speech Characteristics of Poor Readers*. T. C. Contributions to Education, No. 657. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1935.
12. Briggs, Thomas H. and Armacost, George H., "Results of an Oral True-False Test," *Journal of Educational Research*, XXVI (April, 1933), 595-96.
13. Brown, Don, "Teaching Aural English," *English Journal*, XXXIX (March, 1950), 128-36.
14. Brown, James I., "A Comparison of Listening and Reading Ability," *College English*, X (November, 1948), 105-7.
15. Brown, James I., "Construction of a Diagnostic Test of Listening Comprehension," *Journal of Experimental Education*, XVIII (December, 1949), 139-46.
16. Brown, James I., "Measurement of Listening Ability," *School and Society*, LXXI (February, 1950), 69-71.
17. Chall, Jeanne S. and Dial, Harrold E., "Predicting Listening Understanding and Interest in Newscasts," *Educational Research Bulletin*, XXIX (September, 1948), 141-53.
18. Clark, Weston R., "Radio Listening Habits of Children," *Journal of Social Psychology*, XII (August, 1940), 44-8.
19. Commission on the English Curriculum, *The English Language Arts*. National Council of Teachers of English, 1952.
20. Corey, S. M., "Learning from Lectures Versus Learning from Readings," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, XXV (September, 1934), 459-70.
21. DeWick, Henry N., "The Relative Recall Effectiveness of Visual and Auditory Presentation of Advertising Material," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, XIX (June, 1935), 245-64.
22. Dias, Earl J., "Three Levels of Listening," *English Journal*, XXVI (May, 1947), 252-54.
23. Dietrich, John E., "The Relative Effectiveness of Two Modes of Radio Delivery in Influencing Attitudes," *Speech Monographs*, XIII (1946), 58-65.
24. Ewing, W. H., "Finding a Speaking-Listening Index," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XXXI (October, 1945), 368-70.
25. Gates, Arthur I., *Manual of Directions for Gates Reading Readiness Tests*. New York: T. C. Bureau of Publications, Columbia University, 1939.
26. Goldstein, Harry, *Reading and Listening Comprehension at Various Controlled Rates*. Contribution to Education, No. 821. New York: Bureau of Publications, Columbia University, 1940.
27. Goodenough, Florence L., "The Reading Tests of the Stanford Achievement Scale and Other Variables," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, XVI (November, 1925), 523-31.
28. Haiman, Franklyn S., "An Experimental Study of the Effects of Ethos in Public Speaking," *Speech Monographs*, XVI (September, 1949), 190-202.
29. Harrel, Thomas W., Brown, Donald E., and Schramm, W., "Memory in Radio News Listening," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, XXXIII (June, 1949), 265-74.
30. Hatfield, Wilbur W., "Parallels in Teaching Students to Listen and to Read," *English Journal*, XXXV (December, 1946), 553-58.
31. Heider, Fritz and Heider, Grace M., "Comparison of Sentence Structure of Deaf and Hearing Children," *Volta Review*, XLIII (June, September, October, 1941) 364-67; 536-40; 599-604.
32. Heilman, Arthur W., "An Investigation in Measuring and Improving Listening Ability," *Speech Monographs*, XVIII (November, 1951), 302-8.
33. Hildreth, Gertrude, "An Individual Study in Word Recognition," *Elementary School Journal*, XXXV (April, 1945), 606-19.
34. Hildreth, Gertrude, "Interrelationships Among the Language Arts," *Elementary School Journal*, XLVI (June, 1948), 538-49.
35. Hook, J. N., "Developing Good Listeners," *Journal of Education*, CXXXII (April, 1949), 110, 112-14.
36. Horn, Ernest, *Methods of Instruction in the Social Studies*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937.
37. Hughes, Virgil, *A Study of the Interrelationships Among Selected Language Arts Areas and Abilities*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Missouri, 1950.

38. Jacobs, Muriel G., "Are You Listening?" *Elementary English*, XXVII (January, 1950), 19-22.
39. Johnson, Kenneth O., "Effects of Classroom Training on Listening Comprehension," *Journal of Communication*, I (May, 1951), 57-62.
40. Knower, Franklin H., Phillips, David; and Keopel, Fern, "Studies in Listening to Effective Speaking," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, XL (February, 1945), 82-8.
41. Krawiec, Theophile, "A Comparison of Learning and Retention of Material Presented Visually and Auditorially," *Journal of General Psychology*, XXXIV (April, 1946), 179-95.
42. Ladd, Margaret R., "The Relation of Social, Economic, and Personal Characteristics to Reading Ability. Teachers College Contributions to Education, No. 582, 1933.
43. Langsam, Rosalind S., "A Factorial Analysis of Reading Ability," *Journal of Experimental Education*, X (September, 1941), 57-63.
44. Larsen, Robert P. and Feder, D. D., "Common and Differential Factors in Reading and Hearing Comprehension," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, XXXI (April, 1940), 241-52.
45. Lodge, William J., "Developmental Characteristics of Childhood Related to the Language Arts Curriculum," *Elementary English*, XXX (February, 1953), 106-15, 122.
46. Lowdermilk, Ronald R., "Attitude Shifts from Reading and from Radio-Program Listening," Unpublished doctor's dissertation, Ohio State University, 1939.
47. McCarthy, Dorothea, "Language Development in Children," in *Manual of Child Psychology*, Leonard Carnichael (Ed.) New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1946, Chapter 10.
48. Monroe, Marion, *Children Who Cannot Read*. University of Chicago Press, 1932.
49. Morkovin, Boris V., "Growth Through Speaking and Listening," *Elementary English*, XXVI (March, 1949), 129-31, 41.
50. Murphy, George, "We Also Learn by Listening," *Elementary English*, XXVI (March, 1949), 127-8, 157.
51. Nelson, Harold E., "The Effect of Variation of Rate on the Recall by Radio Listening of 'Straight' Newscasters," *Speech Monographs*, XV (No. 2, 1948), 173-80.
52. Nelson, Harold E., "The Relative Contributions to Learning of Video and Audio Elements in Films," *Speech Monographs*, XVIII (March, 1951), 70-73.
53. Nichols, Ralph G., "The Teaching of Listening," *Chicago Schools Journal*, XXX (June, 1949), 273-78.
54. Nichols, Ralph G., "Factors in Listening Comprehension," *Speech Monographs*, XV (No. 2, 1948), 154-63.
55. Novokosky, Gertrude, "Radio and Language Arts," *Elementary English*, XXV (February, 1948), 103-8.
56. Novotny, Lillian E., "Education and the Mass Media of Communication: Radio," *Elementary English*, XXVII (April, 1950), 240-46, 253.
57. Park, Joe, "Vocabulary and Comprehension Difficulties of Sound Motion Pictures," *School Review*, LIII (March, 1945), 154-62.
58. Prince, Bernice Louise, "A Study of Classroom Listening Effectiveness in Basic Communication; Its Relationship to Certain Other Factors," Masters Thesis, University of Denver, 1948.
59. Reynolds, M. C., "A Study of the Relationships Between Auditory Characteristics and Specific Silent Reading Abilities," *Journal of Educational Research*, XLVI (February, 1953), 439-49.
60. Ricciuti, Edward A., "Children and Radio: A Study of Listeners and Non-Listeners to Various Types of Radio Programs in Terms of Selected Ability, Attitude, and Behavior Measures," *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, XLIV (August, 1951), 69-143.
61. Rulon, Phillip J., "Comparison of Phonographic Recordings with Printed Material in Terms of Knowledge Gained Through Their Use Alone," *Harvard Educational Review*, XIII (January, 1943), 63-76.
62. Rulon, Phillip J., "Comparison of Phonographic Recordings with Printed Materials in Terms of Knowledge Gained through Their Use in a Teaching Unit," *Harvard Educational Review*, XIII (March, 1943), 163-75.
63. Russell, R. D., "A Comparison of Two Methods of Learning," *Journal of Educational Research*, XVIII (October, 1928), 235-38.
64. Schmidt, Bernardine G., "Visual and Auditory Associations in Reading Disability Cases," *Journal of Exceptional Children*, X (January, 1944), 98-105.
65. Schonell, Fred J., *Backwardness in the Basic Subjects*. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co., Ltd., 1942.
66. Seegers, J. C. and Seashore, R. H., "How Large Are Children's Vocabularies?" *Elementary English*, XXVI (April, 1949), 181-94.
67. Selover, Robert B. and Porter, James P., "Prediction of the Scholarship of Freshman Men by Tests of Listening and Learning Ability," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, XXI (October, 1937), 583-88.
68. Smith, Dora, "Growth in Language Power as Related to Child Development" in *Teaching Language in the Elementary School*, Forty-third Yearbook, Part II. National Society for the Study of Education, 1944.
69. Spache, George, "The Construction and Validation of a Work-Type Auditory Comprehension Reading Test," *Educational and Psychological Measurements*, X (No. 2, 1950), 249-53.
70. Spencer, E. M., "The Retention of Orally Presented Material," *Programs Announcing Candidates for Higher Degrees*, State University of Iowa, Series on Aims and Progress of Research #66, 1940.
71. Sterner, Alice P. and others, *Skill in Listening* (Chicago, National Council of Teachers of English, 1942).
72. Sterner, Alice P., *Radio, Motion Pictures, and Reading Interests*. Teachers College Contributions to Education, #932, 1947.
73. Strickland, Ruth G., *The Language Arts in the Elementary School*. D. C. Heath, 1951.

74. Stroud, James D., *Psychology in Education*, New York, 1946.
75. Tireman, L. S. and Woods, Velma E., "Aural and Visual Comprehension of English by Spanish-Speaking Children," *Elementary School Journal*, XL (November, 1939), 204-11.
76. Treanor, John H., "Listen Before Writing," *Elementary English*, XXX (April, 1953), 207-9.
77. Watts, A. F., *The Language and Mental Development of Children*. Boston: D. C. Heath, 1944.
78. Wells, Charlotte, "Factors That Influence Language Growth," *Elementary English*, XXIX (October, 1952), 348-55.
79. Wilt, Miriam E., "A Study of Teacher Awareness of Listening as a Factor in Elementary Education," *Journal of Educational Research*, XLIII (April, 1950), 626-36.
80. Wilt, Miriam E., "What Is the Listening Radio in Your Classroom?" *Elementary English*, XXVI (May, 1949), 259-64.
81. Young, F. M., "An Analysis of Certain Variables in a Developmental Study of Language," *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, XXIII (1941), 3-141.
82. Young, William E., "The Relation of Reading Comprehension and Retention to Hearing Comprehension and Retention," *Journal of Experimental Education*, V (September, 1936), 30-39.

TEACHING PROCEDURES FOR SPELLING

(Continued from Page 162)

- Fitzgerald, James A., *The Teaching of Spelling*. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1951.
- Gambella, Marion, "Spelling Readiness," *Instructor*, 60: 13, January, 1951.
- Horn, Ernest, "Principles of Methods in Teaching Spelling as Derived from Scientific Investigation," *Eighteenth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*. Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1919.
-, "Spelling," *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*. New York: Macmillan Company, 1941.
- Johnson, Louise Hening, "That Abomination, English Spelling," *College English*, 12: 159-62, December, 1950.
- Hildreth, Gertrude, "An Evaluation of Spelling Word Lists and Vocabulary Studies," *Elementary School Journal*, 51: 254-65, January, 1951.
- Kottmeyer, William, *On the Relationship of Skills in Reading and Spelling*. St. Louis: Webster Publishing Company, n.d.
- McIntire, Alta, and H. L. Hampton, "Spelling Readiness: A Challenge," *Elementary English Review*, 21: 24-5, January, 1944.
- Makey, Herman O., "Giving Spelling Life," *Elementary English*, 27: 306-8, May, 1950.
- National Education Association of the United States, Department of Superintendence, "Reports of National Subject Committees," *Fourth Yearbook*, Part 3. Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1926.
- Rutan, Edward J., "A Meaning Approach to Spelling," *Elementary English*, 27: 79-81, February, 1950.
- Thurston, Marjorie H., "The Long and the Short of It," *English Journal*, 39: 522-4, November, 1950.
- Wisconsin Cooperative Educational Planning Program, *Spelling in the Language Arts Program*, Language Arts Bulletin No. 5. Madison, Wisconsin: State Department of Public Instruction, 1949.

Current English Forum

D. B. M. writes: "I was taught that making subjects and verbs agree in person and number is a primary requirement of good English. I note, however, fairly frequent violations of subject-verb agreement in the conversation of educated people and occasional lapses of it in published writing. Is the English language growing more free and easy, or are people who should know better becoming more careless?"

The entire problem of subject-verb agreement in present-day English is too large a one to be treated adequately in a relatively brief reply to the question asked. The general principle governing subject-verb agreement in modern English can, however, be explained and illustrated. To begin with, our verbs have long since lost most of the distinct inflections which they once had. In the past tense of most modern English verbs, whether they be regular verbs (ones forming the past tense by adding *d* or *ed* to the present) or irregular verbs (ones forming the past tense by an internal vowel change), we use the same form of the verb with all persons and numbers. We have "I walked; you (singular or plural) walked; he, she, or it walked; we walked; they walked." Similarly we have "I threw; you (singular or plural) threw; he, she, or it threw; we threw; they threw." It should be clear that the common past tense forms of most modern English verbs, such as walked or threw, express neither person nor number, standing alone. It is the noun or pronoun subject of the verb which actually expresses the person and number. In the present tense of most of our verbs we use the same form for all persons and numbers with a single exception, the third person singular, which has an *s* inflection. We have, for example, "I know; you (singular or plural) know; he, she, or it *knows*; we know; they know." Thus, *know*, as a present tense verb form, also expresses neither person nor number by itself.

Again it is the subject to which *know* is joined which expresses person and number. And in the case of the pronoun, *you*, we require a larger context to know whether it is singular or plural. The statement that "a verb agrees in person and number with its subject" is simply a pointless one, except in reference to the third person singular *s* form of the present tense, for all the verbs in modern English with one exception—the special forms of the verb, *to be*.

The only situations in which we have any "problems" of subject-verb agreement in present-day English, therefore, are with the *s* form of the third person singular of the present tense of the great bulk of our verbs and with the unique forms of *to be*. The "rule" for subject-verb agreement in these cases, the only ones which present any problems, should be stated: "A verb agrees in number with the singular or plural *meaning* of the subject, rather than with the singular or plural *form* of the subject." Let us consider the case of the collective noun. A noun like *jury* is singular in its form. We say, "The jury *has* reached *its* verdict," using the singular form, *has*, because the action is felt as the single action of the group as a whole. But we say, "The jury *are* now arguing among themselves." We simply could not say, "The jury is arguing among itself," and make sense. We would say similarly, "The family *is* a happy one," but "The family *are* always quarreling with one another."

We often have subjects which, although compound in form, are clearly singular in meaning or intent. In "His teacher and good friend *has* retired," the form of the subject is compound, but the meaning is obviously singular since *teacher* and *good friend* refer to the same person. Sometimes, even when the parts of a compound subject refer to different persons or things; we feel singularity about the total subject. We may feel "training" and "discipline"

in military life to be parts of a single whole and say, "The training and discipline was effective" in place of "The training and discipline were effective." Whether we use the singular or plural form of the verb with such compound subjects will depend on whether we feel "singular" or "plural" about the subject. Of course, the established usage of Standard English rules out such violations of subject-verb agreement as "He don't," "We was," "They was," "They thinks that way," and similar locutions. All too frequently, however, textbook exercises on subject-verb agreement are based on the assumption that verbs ought always to agree in number with the form of the subject, regardless of the intent of it, an assumption which is simply not true to the actual facts of the English language.

It is interesting to note how dependent we

often are in modern English upon some context of speech or writing to know just what a given word is doing. For example, *walks* might be the plural form of the noun, *walk*, as in "He takes frequent *walks*." It might, however, be the inflected verb form of the present tense as in "He *walks* frequently." *Throw* might be a noun as in "The catcher made a good *throw*," or it might be a verb form as in "We *throw* old papers out" and "They *throw* their old clothes away."

Edward L. Anderson

Brooklyn College

[Note: This department is sponsored by the Council's Committee on Current English Usage, Margaret M. Bryant, *chairman*.]

The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹

In the summer of 1954, the National Council of Teachers of English is holding three conferences. One of these is to be held at Appalachian State Teachers College in Boone, North Carolina on August 17-20 inclusive. It will be centered around the elementary and secondary volumes of the forthcoming curriculum series of the Council and thus be intended for elementary and secondary teachers. Dr. Dora V. Smith, Director of the Curriculum Commission, is one of several leading members of the Council who will be active at the conference. Later announcements concerning the Boone Conference will outline the program in detail and specify the persons who will lead the conference's various sessions.

Preliminary plans call for a general session each morning to be followed by discussion groups divided according to areas of the English curriculum and/or major problems in teaching. Interest groups will be organized for afternoon

sessions. In the discussion and interest groups will be resource persons of national note.

Since Boone is one of the beauty spots of the nation and is comfortably cool throughout the summer, opportunities for scenic trips will be featured. One proposed trip will include beautiful Blowing Rock, near-by Cone Estate with its regional crafts, lofty Grandfather Mountain, and the scenic highway *via* Banner Elk. Another will follow the Blue Ridge Parkway to Doughton Park where there will be a dinner at the famous inn of Duncan Hines' ilk. Too, there will be special rates for tickets to "Horn in the West," the spectacular outdoor drama held in a natural amphitheatre at the edge of Boone. Many other trips can be planned to places of interest in the immediate area; for instance, famous Barter Theater in Abingdon, Virginia and Penland School with its crafts program.

At the direction of the Executive Committee
¹Wisconsin State College, Milwaukee.

of the Council, attendance will be limited to 50 elementary and 50 secondary teachers, except that Thursday will be planned so as to permit teachers in near-by Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina schools to attend for one day. Registrants will be housed in a new dormitory, with linens furnished, for two dollars a day. Meals will be available at reasonable rates at the college cafeteria. To defray expenses (but pay no salaries), a registration fee of ten dollars is planned for the four-day conference. Persons interested in learning more details may watch subsequent issues of this journal or write Dr. Mildred A. Dawson, Appalachian State Teachers College, Boone, N. C.



One of the favorite after-dinner speakers in recent years is the exchange-teacher-returned. We were happy to find the tables turned in the Winter issue of the British magazine *The Use of English*. Happily, too, A. H. White appeared to state only "the facts" in his short article, "Impressions of English Teaching in the U. S. A."

Mr. White spent a year at the Oak Park-River High School, Oak Park, Illinois. We found these reactions interesting:

1. English is given a more prominent place in American high schools than it is in British schools.
2. Secondary and higher education in America is more extensive and extended. Fifty percent of our adolescents complete high school, and, while we have a population three times that of the British, we have three million students in college, compared to their 84,000.
3. Elementary school work is attuned to the pupils, few pupils fail to graduate from high school, and there is only one external examining body (the N. Y. Regents). British pupils are forced to "jump through the hoop."
4. Our striving for uniformity to some extent elevates grammar and analysis above expression.
5. American literature study is increasing

at the expense of English literature.

6. American themes are not as lengthy as their British counterpart.

7. English class activities—plays, school papers, magazines, and the library—here have a more prominent position and are taught or supervised by specialists.

Mr. White's final paragraph indicates that there is something less than satisfaction among British teachers with the British English curriculum. In addition, the different objectives of the two systems are pointed up:

In the United States English is the key-stone of education. There is none of the hypocritical lip-service and the nonsense we have, whereby sophisticated embryo scientists are without a course in their native language after the age of fifteen. Whilst our standards in examinations are much more exacting, the American boy will have heard something of English literature, though his cousin here knows nothing of American literature. Their courses are so much wider than ours that they are surveys, lacking the discipline demanded in our studies in set books. They scatter seed widely and thinly, we cultivate fewer fields far more intensively.



Several views of modern language teaching caught our eye in this month's reading. Two of the articles were antithetical. Without wishing to fan the ideas into a flaming controversy, we shall review the articles.

Prof. Theodore Anderson writes that the average child between four and six can learn to speak several languages simultaneously without interfering with his ability to master his native tongue. In a handbook, *The Teaching of Foreign Languages in the Elementary School*, Mr. Anderson contends that foreign languages should be taught in the lower grades and not in high school. He feels that after the age of six the child's ability to learn a foreign language slumps rapidly. By the time the child has reached high school, the time that tradition says he should study a foreign language, he has

"slowed to a plodding walk, linguistically speaking." As evidence to support his position, he offers the example of children at overseas American military bases. They quickly learn foreign tongues while their parents struggle with the new languages.

A more cautious position is taken by H. Bongers in the *Educational Research Bulletin* for September 16, 1953. Bongers feels that there is not enough evidence to conclude validly that foreign languages should or should not be taught in the elementary school. Bongers says, first, that because "a child picks up certain foreign language elements more easily than older children is not in itself a reason to teach him a foreign language." Parallels which are drawn by using children's love for secret codes and language are faulty. The objective with these is communication, not accuracy or fluency. The child may invent or interpolate when he finds his vocabulary inadequate. This habit of inaccuracy and the lack of understanding of foreign syntax patterns will certainly not help the child to learn another language. Neither is a love for foreign-sounding elements equivalent to the desire to learn a foreign mode of social behavior.

The second point is that since English is the instrument for thought which the child will use for the rest of his life, proficiency in it should be developed to a high degree before he is permitted to learn another language. Bongers feels that much can still be done in improving mastery of English in twenty-year-olds, and that all the time that is available before he enters high school should be given to mastering the mother tongue.

Finally, the problems of bilingualism in countries which speak more than one language should be considered apart from the teaching of a second language in school. Educators in such countries do not agree, and evidence is inconclusive but not in agreement with generally accepted opinions, that bilingualism retards the development of the personality and results in

arrears at school.

The third discussion of foreign language teaching was made to illustrate an entirely different point. Norman P. Sacks' "A Linguist's View of the Current Public School Controversy," which we found in the Spring (1953) issue of the *AAUP Bulletin*, analyzes the "deficiencies" of progressive education, and issues a call to "academic people" to come to its aid in this era of unqualified, axe-grinding attacks.

Mr. Sacks illustrates the progressives' fallibility by pointing to their feeling about foreign language teaching in the public school as a place where the spirit of constant re-examination and reappraisal of their tenets and present position has not been made. He credits the progressives with emphasizing the human factor and throwing the spotlight on good teaching, but he feels that they have not developed an intelligent appreciation of the aims of the academic fields. Contrariwise, the academic teacher has not developed an interest in the public school and has not tried to find out what progressive educators are trying to do.

In his discussion of the progressives' attitudes toward foreign language teaching, Mr. Sacks finds three old arguments no longer satisfactory:

(a) *The language taught in school is different from that spoken by the natives.* Sacks says that foreign language methodology has passed the day of "parsing, rote memorization of paradigms, verbal nonsense, and an abnormal concern with grammatical nomenclature." Conversation facility can be developed in a relatively short time, as proven by the Army language programs.

(b) *Foreign language programs as now constituted should not be taught.* The same people may say that the study of foreign cultures is a valid part of the curriculum, as a part of the nation's responsibility in assuming world leadership. Mr. Sacks believes that the second idea is merely an extension of the first, not different from it.

(c) *Foreign languages are too difficult for students generally and should be reserved only for those who will profit from their study.* The term "language block" has been overworked. Better it is that the student who suffers from foreign language study be excused in order that he may not transfer his antagonism for the language to the speakers of the language, than for educators to rationalize his ineptitude.

Sacks mentions some of the well-known linguistic findings which have affected much foreign language teaching—the fallibility of the "correctness" theory, constant change, the idea that language is fundamentally speech, words are symbols with arbitrary and relative meanings, etc.—as evidence that the linguist's approach is marked "by tolerance, relativism, and a democratic spirit." These qualities, he says, should appeal to "progressive educators."

Everyone's doing it these days, and, as educational television gains momentum, you and your class may be the next chosen to go on television. More than that, you may be asked to work up a five-minute part of a program that your system is going to present. Good pointers on what to expect and how to cut your woes to a minimum are offered by Frank Wachowiak in "Going on Television?" in the December *Junior Arts and Activities*. Mr. Wachowiak bases his ideas on the experience of presenting a series of 36 telecasts on art in the school over WOI-TV, Ames, Iowa.

The Seventh University of Kentucky Foreign Language Conference will be held April 22-24. In addition to the general sessions there will be sections for Classical Languages, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Spanish, Latin American Literature, Slavonic Languages, Biblical and Patristic Languages, Comparative Literature, Linguistics, High School Teaching of Classical Languages, High School Teaching of Modern Languages, Teaching of Languages in the Elementary School, Folklore, and International Re-

lations. Those wishing programs or wishing to offer papers (for 1954 or in the future) should write to Professor Jonah W. D. Skiles, Director, Foreign Language Conference, University of Kentucky, Lexington.



New publications received:

Our Portland Water System

Our Portland Parks

The Captain's Bridge

Going Places in Portland

World at Our Doorstep, Book I, *Seaport on the Willamette*, by Dorothy Leigh.

Five publications of the Portland, Oregon Public Schools of local interest, but valuable as examples of what local systems can do with features from their backyards. Written for the low and middle grades and well illustrated with photographs of ships and boats, bridges, harbors, and mountains. Fifty cents each from the Portland Public Schools.

Toward Better Speech, Curriculum Bulletin No. 5, 1952-3, Board of Education, City of New York. A manual for teachers of all grades which emphasizes the necessity for good speech and suggests ways in which a good speech program may be made successful through the development of basic skills and their employment in experiences. For information concerning availability write Board of Education of the City of New York, 110 Livingston Street, Brooklyn 1, New York.

Developmental Reading, compiled by Russell G. Stauffer. Proceedings of the 1953 Education Conference on Reading at the University of Delaware, with summaries of discussions and speeches by teachers and well-known educators. Price \$1.50, from the University Bookstore, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware.

We Talk Together

I Am the Author

Language Arts Resource Booklets published by the Fond du Lac, Wisconsin public schools. Prepared by teachers as they worked with children. The booklets indicate the basic ideas used

in creative writing and conversation in the lower grades of the Fon du Lac schools.

Junior Reviewers. A bi-monthly journal which reviews about 50 children's books each issue. Children aged 2 to 15 from all over the country review the books, which are then appraised by the magazine's adult board. Subscriptions cost \$3.50 the year from the publications office, 241 Greenwood Street, Newton Centre 59, Mass. *Junior Reviewers* also publishes a catalog every two years. The catalog lists not only the good new books, but recommended older publications and classics. The catalog is divided into age groups and subjects, and is indexed and annotated. It is free to subscribers or may be purchased for seventy-five cents.

Supplements A and B to *Educational Reading Guide for the Partially Seeing*, by Lorraine Galisdorfer. Annotated bibliographical supplement. Order from Foster and Stewart Publishing Corporation, Buffalo 3, New York. Price unknown.



Oral Drill: Word Endings, Verb Forms

Vocabulary Study in the Elementary School. Pamphlets by John Treanor. For the upper elementary group. Order from the author at 5 Agassiz Park, Boston 30. Twenty-five cents each.

Creative Writing. Bi-monthly publication of the National Poetry Association, 3210 Selby Avenue, Los Angeles, 34, Calif. Miscellany of poems (old and student), poets, and poesy. One dollar a year.



Materials for looking and listening

A new and revised *Educational Catalog* listing all the filmstrips, 2 x 2 slides, and color slidesets for the school market, as well as a section devoted exclusively to equipment and accessories, has just been released by the Society for Visual Education, Inc.

The 58-page catalog is arranged by subject areas—literature and language arts; social studies; the sciences; mathematics; health, safety, and physical education; guidance and child development; vocations; and fine arts. Filmstrips are all grouped together in one individual section, as are the slides and slidesets.

The catalog is available from S. V. E., 1345 Diversey Parkway, Chicago 14.



Secrets of Good Color Projection may contain the answer to your color projection questions. The new 16-page booklet tells how to prepare project color pictures. A free copy may be requested from the Public Relations Department, Radiant Manufacturing Corporation, 2627 W. Roosevelt Road, Chicago 8.



Television Teaching Aid is an educational service published bi-weekly by the Prudential Insurance Company of America to accompany the CBS-TV documentary "You Are There." The first of the series was "The Moscow Purge Trials." Other subjects to be carried are of wide coverage and specific interests. The four-page publication includes background information, suggested activities for social studies, communications and other classes, and suggested reading.



A descriptive folder and price list of their catalog card service for sound recordings is available from the Library of Congress, Card Division, Washington 25, D. C. This supplements their previous service on motion pictures.



Franco-American Audio-Visual Distribution Center, Inc. has a new catalog of their lending collection of colored lantern slides, films, bulletin-board exhibitions, filmstrips, and recordings. Write to 972 Fifth Avenue, New York 21 for a copy.



Here are the titles of the March, 1954 Junior Literary Guild selections:

For boys and girls 5 and 6 years old: *The Village Tree*, by Taro Yashima. Viking, \$2.50.

For boys and girls 7 and 8 years old: *Apollonia's Valentine*, by Katherine Milhous. Scribner's, \$2.00.

For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years old:

Finnegan II, His Nine Lives, by Carolyn Sherwin Bailey. Viking, \$2.50.

For girls 12 to 16 years old: *Step to the Music*, by Phyllis A. Whitney. Crowell, \$2.75.

For boys 12 to 16 years old: *River Circus*, by West Lathrop. Random, \$2.75.

Professional Publications

Health and Safety Plays and Programs. By Aileen Fisher. Plays, Inc., \$3.50.

Health and Safety Plays and Programs is really two collections of original plays, skits, group readings, songs, and recitations: those on the topic of Health, and a similar number centered about Safety. As a source of non-royalty skits and plays for use in an occasional auditorium period, and as a reference for material which might be used in homeroom or "ad" room orientation or guidance periods, the collection can be put to many uses.

As a skit writer and a rhymist Miss Fisher does very well. Her characters bring out the best in both commonplace and fanciful situations, and she is adroit in the use of parody. But somehow the book left this writer unconvinced because too many of the situations were improbable and unreal. Boys and girls learn at an early age to look for "the moral" in a story or poem. When the moral is the point of the story rather than incidental to it, children lose much of their enthusiasm. An overdose of this sort of heavily didactic activities can quickly quench their thirst for literature.

The editor has suggested no age or grade level at which *Health and Safety Plays and Programs* might be used. Younger children will enjoy the poems and group readings, but may find the plays difficult to perform. Children in the middle and upper grades may find much of the material childish. Whether we like it or not, radio, television, and other "educational enrichers" have made our elementary group quite sophisticated.

William A. Jenkins

Wisconsin State College, Milwaukee

Inter-Group Education in Kindergarten-Primary Groups. By Celia Burns Stendler and William E. Martin. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953.

Inter-Group Education in Kindergarten-Primary Groups is a small book in size but it says a great deal. In a direct, concise, and unembroidered fashion, the authors discuss classroom practices and the need for constant re-examination of the techniques for development of wholesome attitudes in young children towards differences in people.

Feelings of difference include not only differences of race, religion, creed, and nationality but the meanings as well for the young child of socio-economic differences and variations in family structure. While there is a short presentation of how some of these differences become cause for prejudice, the authors are primarily concerned with the end result—the attitude. They are as concerned with what the prejudice does to the development of the individual child who cannot accept difference in others as they are about the child who experiences rejection and exclusion because of his difference.

The stated purpose of the authors is not to introduce a new theory of Inter-Group Education but rather to analyze current practice in the classroom and cull the best. They describe practices and set down guiding principles of sound Inter-Group Education for the child in kindergarten and the first three grades. There is

(Continued on Page 180)

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

EDITED BY MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT

[*May Hill Arbuthnot is well-known as teacher, writer, and lecturer in the field of children's books. She is author of the volume, CHILDREN AND BOOKS (Scott, Foresman, 1947) and editor of the new Arbuthnot Anthology of Children's Literature, Scott, Foresman, 1953.*

For all who love riddles

Mother Goose Riddles. By Joseph Low with help from Ruth Low. Illustrated by Joseph Low. Harcourt, 1953. \$2.50. (6-)

Mr. Low has made a modern rebus from familiar Mother Goose rhymes that will entertain party guests, convalescents, and any child who likes to try his wits. Elegant in appearance, clever in conception, it is a real brain teaser for young and old. The picture-scripts are amazingly good and even adults who know their Mother Goose by heart will find themselves yearning for a glance at the back-of-the-book solutions. The cover of this little book is so beautiful in design it should be a parlor piece but is guaranteed to be an active one which neither children nor stray guests will put down until solved.



From *Mother Goose Riddles*

Black Within and Red Without. Compiled by Lillian Morrison. Illustrated by Jo Spier. Crowell, 1953. \$2.00. (6-)

Youth has always loved a good riddle and here is a wise and witty collection of nearly 200 traditional puzzlers from Ancient Greece, Egypt, the Orient and round the world to the British Isles, the West Indies, and our own Ozark mountains. Not only are most of them unusual but as the author says, "they sound good." And so they do, in verse form as fresh and gay as their wit and sometimes downright beautiful to hear and say. This too is a treasure of a book for young and old. But let the children have it first to try on you and so have the fun of showing up the unwisdom of the wise.

A variety of verse

Sleepy A B C. By Margaret Wise Brown. Pictures by Esphyr Slobodkin. Lothrop, 1953. \$2.00. (4-7)

Muted colors and softly cadenced words make the *Sleepy A B C* a lullaby of unusual charm.

D is for Dreams and the dark Wind that blows
E is for Eyes that all must close
the child's the rabbit's and the rose.

The late Margaret Wise Brown never achieved mastery of verse forms but she had strong feeling for the poetic beauty of words and the use of cadence. This book breathes reassurance and tenderness in every line and small children (under five) like it. A new color process was used to make over a hundred variations of four basic colors, so the book is beautiful to look at as well as to hear.

On a Summer Day. Written and illustrated by Lois Lenski. Oxford, 1953. \$1.25. (4-6)

This completes the little books of the four seasons upon which Lois Lenski has worked so lovingly. They are small books, only 5 x 5½, but so gay and pretty inside and out they lift the spirits just to look at them. *Summer* records the games the children like to play outdoors—store, dress up, swinging, picnics, and the like. A four line jingle describes the play and a charming picture illustrates it. The skipping, hopping, running figures are as gay as crickets.



From *On A Summer Day*

In all four books—*Now Its Fall, I Like Winter, Spring Is Here* and *On a Summer Day*, Miss Lenski has captured the friskiness and something of the earthy charm of small children at play.

Jingle Jangle. Written and illustrated by Zhenya Gay. Viking, 1953. \$2.00. (3-6)



From *Jingle Jangle*

Gay, beautiful pictures of a small boy blowing through a blade of grass, a squirrel with its hand on its heart, rabbits leaping or a field mouse looking shyly at the world through a curtain of grasses, these and many others have action and rare storytelling power. They say more than the verses and the reader has to pull his eyes away from these enchanting pictures to read. But the little verses also reflect the child's interests in the ways of the small creatures—a ladybug, a field mouse, woodchucks and worms, colts and kittens, goats and more kittens. The best of the verses are richly sensory, "Night things are soft and loud," "The world is full of wonderful smells," with happy examples of both. There is one brief and amusing story poem about "A sad fat beaver" and there are some genuinely funny nonsense verses such as, "When a goose meets a moose," "At the organ an elephant" a little boy dancing with a cat, and others. The whole collection would be better for a few deletions but the subjects of the verses and the entrancing illustrations should make this a popular book in nursery schools and kindergartens.

A Is for Angel. Written and illustrated by Joan Gale Thomas. Lothrop, 1953. \$1.00. (4-10)

In both Protestant and Catholic editions this reverent little alphabet book views the world with the fresh young eyes of faith. B stands for the Bethlehem Babe, E for Everyone loved by God, Q is the Quiet that lives in the church, W for Worshipping and thanking God. The verses which enlarge these ideas are simple but unusually appealing to young children. So are the illustrations with their greens and rose. The whole book is unaffectedly devotional and full of tender reassurance. Mothers will like this book for their children and so will teachers.

Up the Windy Hill. Written and illustrated by Aileen Fisher, Abelard Press, 1953. \$2.00. (6-9)

This charming title is an invitation to a child's outdoor world and to singing words. Some of the verses do sing—"It's April, "And I Sang Too," "New Moon" and "Rain Song." But the majority of these jingles are not lyrical and all too often the language is commonplace and flat. The amusing whimsey "Coffee Pot Faces" is reprinted here and a delightful new verse, "A Lion Atop a Tree." This last one is completely true to the ferocious complaints of small vehement squirrels. The best of these verses will find their way into anthologies and teachers and children will choose "Do Rabbits Have Christmas?" as one of their favorites.

The Moon Is Shining Bright As Day. Compiled by Ogden Nash. Illustrated by Rose Shirvanian. Lippincott, 1953. \$3.00.

The nonsense verses of Ogden Nash are guaranteed to jolt the morose into a surprised chuckle and bestir the lachrymose to levity. Any book that contains them is worth buying. But except for his own contributions this "anthology of good humored verse" contains few poems not found in other collections and only some 175 verses in all. It opens, oddly enough, with William Blake's "A Robin Redbreast in a cage, Puts all heaven a rage." An angry poem to launch the "good humored verse" and with a comic illustration which belies the protesting

message! This is followed by the nonsense "Story of Augustus Who Would Not Have Any Soup" and this juxtaposition of the serious and nonsensical, which occurs frequently, makes the organization of the verses hard to understand and use. However, the anthology contains some delightful selections, and convenient indexes by authors, first lines, and titles aid in using the book. Mr. Nash has given children eight of his drollest verses and provided adults with a provocative Introduction.

Fantasy, from nursery to college

Journey Cake, Ho! By Ruth Sawyer. Pictures by Robert McClaskey. Viking, 1953. \$2.50. (4-8)

Here is a mountaineer variant of "Johnny Cake," "Pancake," and all the other runners-away from fate. Only, with the inimitable touch of Ruth Sawyer, this *Journey Cake* neatly circles a mountain and brings Johnny home with good fortune for himself, his master and his ma'am. There are gay songs and sour songs, jolly refrains and a whistling boy who loses his whistle but finds it again. Robert McCloskey's illustrations have never been better. The homespun people, the impressive scenic backgrounds, the racing-chasing action are exciting and beautiful. The book itself is lovely in its earthy browns and blues. If some people find that the old Norse tale of the "Pancake" still tells better, let's be grateful for this rare combination of author and artist which has resulted in a fresh and delightful book to look at and read aloud.

Mister Whistle's Secret. Written and illustrated by Tony Palazzo. Scribner's, 1953. \$2.50. (4-7)

Mister Whistle thought he knew a good deal about his toy shop. He knew that the Walking Bear occasionally helped himself to candy and the Clown stole a ride on the wheel toys, now and then. But these were trifles compared to the great moment when he accidentally discovered how to bring the Dancing Doll to life.

That was the beginning of enchanted evenings for Mister Whistle and the other toys. Text and pictures carry the magic of the tale straight into the reader's eyes and imagination. For the doll whirls, pirouettes, and does arabesques exquisitely, thanks to the author's lovely pictures. This is a charming fantasy, as inconclusive as a dream and much more bewitching.

The Magic Ball From Mars. By Carl Beumiller.

Illustrated by Kathleen Voute. Morrows, 1953. \$2.50 (8-12)

The younger space addicts, well under eleven, like this story, which is written with tenderness and a sense of the wonder and beauty of the universe. Johnny, catching fireflies in the twilight meadow, hears a whooshing sound and there before him is an enormous blue top from which a man in a silver tunic is emerging. Because Johnny's father is a physicist, Johnny has heard all about flying saucers, so he is curious rather than afraid. Later, when he shows his father the marble the man left him and his father finds that it is made of a totally unknown substance and obeys Johnny in strange ways, complications begin. They involve a trip to Washington to the Pentagon, violence that would be terrifying were it not for the magic marble, and finally the return of the Man from Outside who admits sadly that it was a mistake to give Johnny the marble which earth men cannot yet be trusted with. Before he leaves, the Man from Outside gives Johnny a reassuring and memorable picture of other worlds and the story closes with Johnny setting out to catch fireflies in the meadow. Not a stiff enough dose of pseudo-science to satisfy older children but exciting enough to please the 8's, 9's and 10's!

Little Witch. By Anna Elizabeth Bennett. Illustrated by Helen Stone. Lippincott, 1953. \$2.50. (8-12)

The jacket of this book carries a picture of a gentle, wistful little witch soaring lonesomely over the children's heads. It predisposes the

reader to sympathy for Minikin Snickasnee, the witch's daughter, and goodness knows, she needs sympathy. Minx, for short, hates witching. She wants to go to school and have friends. But imagine the Principal's state of mind when Minx arrives on her broomstick and devotes the



From *Little Witch*

recess period to letting the children ride it. How Minx with the help of her loyal friends, the law, and a highly spiced assortment of hocus pocus finally manages to escape from the toils of Madame Snickasnee makes a happy conclusion for everyone except the late lamented Witch herself. The magic grows a bit thick and less amusing at the last, but Minx is a beguiling child and with the help of Miss Stone's charming pictures it is easy enough to believe that she wasn't old Snickasnee's daughter at all but the child of a very attractive nymph.

Little Witch was given the first Helen Dean Fish Award for the best book for children, on the Lippincott list, written by a new author.

The Heir to Christmas. By Patricia Gordon. Illustrated by Garry MacKenzie. Viking, 1953. \$2.00. (6-10)

On Christmas afternoon, lonesome Timothy Tompkins dusted off his Great-Great Aunt Sarah's toys and began to put the old fashioned ornaments on his modern Christmas tree. When he did this, he unwittingly worked a Christmas spell. Great-Great Aunt Sarah, as a child with her brothers and sisters, floated gently into the room to play with Timothy and comfort him. When the play was over the dear ghosts faded as gently as they had come but they left a glow

on the tree and in Timothy's heart. Now he knew he was not only heir to Great-Great Aunt Sarah's toys but also to all the happiness that comes with family Christmas customs and affection.

If this concept of family tradition seems rather adult, be reassured. The story is so beautifully and tenderly written that it will carry even to young children, and the 12's will have enough background of experience to understand what Timothy felt about the continuity of family customs and love. Remember this beautiful book next Christmas and when the children have looked at the pictures and heard the story, let them tell you about *their* family customs at Christmas time.

Starman Jones. By Robert A. Heinlein. Illustrated by Clifford Geary. Scribner's, 1953. \$2.50. (12-16)

No one can write the science fiction of space travel as convincingly as Robert Heinlein. Even horse-and-buggy grownups who read his books intending to skim them, find themselves reading every word and forgetting that this is still fiction not fact. Although *Starman Jones* gets off to a somewhat sordid start, the important thing is that he gets off, takes off, goes "spaceside" in comparatively few pages. To be sure, in spite of the fact that his uncle was a member of the Astrogator's Guild and Max him-

for the stars at last.

The story is absorbing. There is as fascinating a pet, Mr. Chips, a spider puppy, as ever broke into fiction. There are colonials returning to their native star, Hespera. There are vividly drawn minor characters. There is "the worry hole" where navigation officers work like mad on their computations with each approach-and-transition from one sky to another. There is Max himself, under a cloud, but finally confessing and winning, not exoneration from his superiors, but a grudging respect because of his mathematical skill and photographic memory. The suspense is almost intolerable when the ailing captain makes some fatal mistakes in his calculations and they break through into an unknown sky surrounding an uncharted star. Life on that star is stranger than any nightmare. But both Max and his colorful and unscrupulous friend Sam redeem themselves and their past mistakes. When the Asgard goes spaceside once more, it is under the captaincy of Max and until he gets his ship through into the familiar sky of Halcyon, the reader will never draw a long breath. A superb story which good readers under 12 will be reading.

Before leaving fantasy, it is pleasant to report that the popularity of Mary Norton's *The Borrowers* (see *Elementary English*, November, 1953) is gaining steadily. Best of all, children are now creating their own rooms for *their* Borrowers, if not the Clock family then some other, no doubt, and with Washington's portrait, stamp size, replacing the Queen's.

Two appealing animal stories

Outlaw Red. By Jim Kjelgaard. Holiday House, 1953. \$2.50. (12-)

Sean was the champion son of Big Red and apparently doomed to the pampered and boring life of kennels and dog shows when every muscle and instinct cried out for the hunt. Then suddenly the Irish setter found himself lost in the wilderness, no food provided, no shelter and worst of all, shot at by men, sheep raisers,



From *Starman Jones*

self was well on his way in the science of astrogation, his first spaceside voyage on the Asgard is under false papers. But Max was too desperate to care about anything except that he was off

who suspected him as a killer. Bewildered and lonely the great dog made a painful but intelligent adjustment to the requirements for survival in the wilderness. A hunter and hunted, he still travelled back secretly to the haunts of men and managed to secure a mate, the very dog with whom he was supposed to have mated the day he was lost. This is stretching the long arm of coincidence a bit, but no one will quarrel with Mr. Kjelgaard's stories as long as he creates dog personalities as alive and noble as his Irish setters. Sean and Penny survived admirably and achieved a family but always the hunger for man and master remained. It is good news that both were found and the pups too, so there should be a long line of young Reds to provide more books. Nor will these books turn stereotyped. Jim Kjelgaard interprets the world of nature, great dogs, and understanding men with a fidelity and warmth that never grow stale.

An Otter's Story. By Emil E. Liers. Illustrated by Tony Palazzo. Viking, 1953. \$2.50. (9-12)

This book will convince any reader, young or old, that a more beguiling wild creature than the playful, affectionate otter does not exist. That they should be so ruthlessly trapped and hunted is hard to understand after this author-naturalist makes clear their usefulness in the balance of nature, both to farmers and fishermen. The story of the life cycle of two otters, Ottiga and Beauty, is authentic but more moving than fiction. Their childhood, youth, and maturity are marked by a frolicking playfulness, family affection, and courage. They slide, play water tag and log rolling, kiss and

cuddle their young and are so friendly they will even play with other creatures—bear cubs, dogs, and children. This story of their migrations, family fun, tragedies and triumphs, every incident of it, is based on fact and observation. The beauty of the North woods and the animals' joyous zest for life is in these pages. Tony Palazzo's illustrations are full of action and high spirits like the text.

Hotspur. Written and illustrated by Mariana. Lothrop, 1953. \$1.25. (4-8)

A tiny book with delicate water color pictures but a lively story, this is the best of Mariana's little fantasies. Hotspur, a red toy horse, finds life in Mr. Twiddlewitch's toy shop unbearably dull, so off he goes looking for a career as a cowboy's horse. His career is troublous. He is shot at by a Wooden Indian, insulted when he is asked to carry dolls instead of cowboys on a merry-go-round, and badly frightened by the fight when he is asked to rescue Cattle Annie from the Indians. Hotspur decides that being a hero is on the whole a perilous business, so he trots meekly back to Mr. Twiddlewitch's toy shop. There life is peaceful except on those occasions when he seems to hear "the far-off tinkling music of a merry-go-round." This will be a pleasant addition to the literature of Christmas toys.

When the Moon Is New. Written and illustrated by Laura Bannon. Whitman, 1953. \$2.75. (8-10)

Laura Bannon could make the denizens of skid row look beautiful. So it will be no surprise to saddened observers of the poverty and squalor of the Seminole Indian camps to find them looking clean, sanitary, and healthy in this handsome book. The mysterious loveliness of the Florida Everglades cannot be exaggerated nor the decorative effect of the shirts and skirts, skillfully sewed from "a thousand pieces," the colorful beads and the remarkable hair-do, which add to the women's calm beauty. All these are recorded in some of Laura Bannon's



From *An Otter's Story*

finest pictures.

The story is slight. Rainbow Jumper is sent to visit her Aunt Liddy at Gopher Camp, "until the moon is new." On her return home she is to find a great surprise. Rainbow Jumper thinks it is going to be a coveted sewing machine but it is something much more precious—a new baby! Human relations and family customs are delightfully presented, and the pictures are entrancing. Only the sleeping platforms are missing.

Run Away Home. By Elinor Lyon. Illustrated by Christine Price. Viking, 1953. \$2.50. (8-12)

Cathie Harris is the most adventurous orphan young readers have ever encountered. She was an inmate of St. Ursula's Home for Female Orphans as the result of a London air raid in which she was found wandering alone, too young to give any clues to her parents. But Cathie is dead sure she belongs somewhere that is not St. Ursula's. For all of her ten years she has remembered rolling waves and white sea sand, and as luck would have it, she hears of such a place in the Highlands of Scotland. How Cathie begs and bludgeons her way to Scotland is quite a story. Two Scotch children assist her and are entranced with the idea of doing some fancy detective work and unearthing Cathie's family. They do it too with the help of some adults who are well nigh distracted with all the carryings on of the determined Cathie and her able assistants. The story pushes credibility rather far, but it is a rousing tale and the author gives us the sights, sounds, and smells of seaswept Western Scotland as a lovely background for Cathie's adventures.

The Dog, the Fox and the Fleas. Written and illustrated by Kurt Wiese. McKay, 1953. \$2.25. (5-9)

This might be a folktale except that the fox plays fair instead of foxy. Also the author insists that he has seen a fox perform the very trick upon which the story turns. Anyway children will chuckle over this story of an old flea-bitten hound and his pups who consult the flealess

fox upon how to get rid of their pests. The fox agrees to show them his method if they promise to stop chasing him. The promise is given, the hounds take the cure, the fleas depart, and peace reigns between dogs and fox. It is earthy humor and the pictures are funny but somehow the reader expects the fox to run true to form and "fox" his enemy. The conclusion is tame.

Star of Wild Horse Canyon. By Clyde Bulla. Illustrated by Grace Crowell, 1953. \$2.00. (7-10)

Danny had outgrown his pony in more ways than one. When he first saw the wild horse, standing white and proud among all the other horses, he secretly called him "Star" and knew that was the horse for him. Sure enough, his uncle Mark's men captured Star but uncle Mark said Danny was altogether too young to have a wild horse, so Danny thought Star was lost to him forever. Then his uncle relented and Star was Danny's to gentle and train. The story follows the usual pattern until Star disappears and a neighboring boy is suspected of keeping the horse. Kindness solves a difficult situation. Not only does Star come home to Danny but a genuine friendship develops between the two boys. Young devotees of Westerns will like this book. Although it follows a familiar line, it provides interesting details of ranch life, wholesome human relationships and a good story into the bargain.

Florina and the Wild Bird. By Selina Chonz. Illustrated by Alois Carigiet. Translated from the German by Anne and Ian Serraillier. Oxford, 1953. \$3.00. (5-10)

What child or adult who had the good luck to encounter the Swiss poem-story, *A Bell for Ursli* has ever forgotten the springtime beauty of the pictures or the satisfaction of his big adventure. Now it seems Ursli had a little sister and this is her story. It is not as adventurous as Ursli's, but is characteristically feminine and just as beautiful pictorially. The illustration showing the whole family, with all the animals, setting off for their hut far up the mountains, walking

through meadows bright with spring flowers, is a lovely introduction to the story. Florina rescues a little wild bird and nurtures it tenderly throughout the summer. When autumn approaches, she faces the sad fact that the bird's captivity must end and she must set it free. The parting is hard for the child, but as the family starts down the mountain to its house, Florina sees her wild bird soaring gloriously overhead with others of its kind. This mild, gentle story told in verse, has the tenderness of a little girl's love and care for a helpless creature and is as joyous as it is compassionate. A distinguished contribution to picture-stories.



From *Mr. Revere and I*

WORD POWER THROUGH SPELLING

LILLIAN E. BILLINGTON

GRADES 2 THROUGH 8

Correct language usage needs to be taught. To make sure that your spelling program contributes to the total language growth of your pupils, examine and use **WORD POWER THROUGH SPELLING**.

Clothbound and workbook editions. Teachers' guides.

SILVER BURDETT COMPANY

45 East 17th St., New York 3, N. Y.

Chicago • Dallas • San Francisco

The Ambitious Elephant. Written and illustrated by Katherine Wood. McKay, 1953. \$1.50. (5-9)

On her sixth birthday Louise the performing elephant broke loose and went out to see the town. She also practiced her tricks as her mother had told her she should. She tossed cans around, pulled some pillars off a porch and upped a protesting policeman to her back. The children yelled with delight and Louise had a fine time until she met her trainer and was spanked by her mother. However, all the children came to see her perform that night, and Louise felt that she was a great success. Young readers are going to laugh with the children in the story when they read and see the little elephant's antics.

PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS

(Continued from Page 179)

a rich variety of illustrative material taken directly from teacher experience. The writers consistently make the necessary point that each classroom provides its own unique situation and consequently requires special analysis and adaptation of skill by the teacher.

Although the authors set down guiding principles, this is no Springfield plan of education. It is a consideration of the dynamics of social forces together with the parent-teacher-child interaction. This is the major contribution of the material. The program recommended makes Inter-Group Education not a separate and isolated piece of classroom material but a theme running constantly throughout the classroom activity as it is touched off in the individual child's, the group's, and the teacher's daily ex-

periences together. While the roles of parents, the community, and the social conditions are included as forces which influence the young child's feelings about difference, major emphasis is placed on the teacher's role and on the teacher's skill.

We know too well, as Stendler and Martin indicate, that recent studies of prejudice in young children demonstrate the large degree to which even the very young begin to take on the destructive attitudes to differences so prevalent in our world. This book is a provocative, concrete, and useful one for teachers and parents who recognize the vital importance of deepening our skill in helping our children develop healthy values in relationships with others.

Florence Lewis

Other Publications of

The National Conference on Research in English:

**EDUCATION AND THE MASS MEDIA
OF COMMUNICATION**

JOHN J. DEBOER, Chairman

Radio, Magazines, Newspapers, Motion Pictures, Recordings, and Their Use in Instruction. Research Findings and Classroom Techniques.

75 cents per copy.

.

READABILITY

EDGAR W. DALE, Chairman

A discussion of problems and techniques in the measurement of reading difficulty of printed materials, by numerous scholars in the field.

60 cents per copy.

.

**READINESS FOR READING AND
RELATED LANGUAGE ARTS**

NILA B. SMITH, Chairman

A highly readable summary of research on reading readiness, and readiness for handwriting, vocabulary, spelling, and language, by well-known specialists.

65 cents per copy.

The English Language Arts

By the Commission on the English Curriculum. The first report of the Commission is an over-all view of language arts instruction at all levels. It sets forth the basic principles which should determine the choice and arrangement of activities and materials. It describes a program at the successive grade levels which follows these principles. It discusses all the important issues which every curriculum committee—or indeed teacher of language arts—must face. This is *the* most important book about curriculum and method in English.

Price, \$3.75

To members, \$2.25

501 pages

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

8110 S. Halsted St.

Chicago 20, Illinois

(Enclose remittance with all orders of \$5.00 or less)

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE LANGUAGE GROWTH

Prepared by a Committee of the
National Conference on Research in English

Dorothea McCarthy, *Chairman*

Charlotte Wells

Ruth G. Strickland

Muriel Crosby

\$.60 each

National Council of Teachers of English

8110 S. Halsted St.,

Chicago 20, Ill.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND THE LANGUAGE ARTS

Prepared by a Committee
of the
National Conference on Research in English

David H. Russell, *Chairman*

John J. DeBoer

Virgil E. Herrick

Bernice E. Leary

William J. Lodge

.75 each

National Council of Teachers of English

8110 S. Halsted St.,

Chicago 20, Ill.

Now... THE NEW BASIC READING PROGRAM
MOVES INTO THE MIDDLE GRADES



with THE NEW Times and Places, Book 4/1

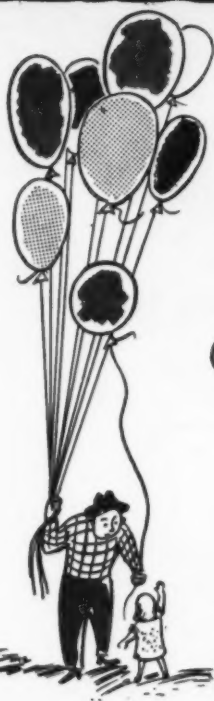
—to be followed with More Times
and Places, Book 4/2

A solid, year-round program to help teachers develop the *basic* reading skills that operate in all areas of the curriculum • ensure continuous, sequential growth for every child in language understandings and reading skills • acquaint children with good literature • provide leads to wide personal reading for every child.

Write for detailed information.

SCOTT, FORESMAN AND COMPANY

Chicago 11 Atlanta 3
Dallas 2 San Francisco 5
New York 10



**LIGHTEN
YOUR TEACHING
LOAD!**

with

THE MACMILLAN ENGLISH SERIES

Grades 2 through 8

by **THOMAS CLARK POLLOCK**
and a staff of experienced co-authors

- You get the unique *alternate system* of instruction.
- You get *continuous* development of all language skills.
- You get the *best manuals* in the field.

Teaching plans are expertly worked out.
No need to make teaching a burden!
Make a **NEW** start with a **NEW** Series.

THE MACMILLAN ENGLISH SERIES

The Macmillan Company

New York 11 • Chicago 16 • Atlanta 3 • Dallas 21 • San Francisco 5

WE LISTENED AND LEARNED

In conducting extensive field research, we listened to teachers' problems in the teaching of English. We learned what teachers want in English textbooks.

Teachers favor English textbooks with:

- Short, independent learning situations.
- A flexible program which is easily adapted to children's interests and needs.
- Exercises and activities which are based on children's experiences and interests.
- A pupil's handbook for ready reference included in each text.

These features and more are included in

THE GOOD ENGLISH SERIES — Grades 2 - 8

SHANE

FERRIS

KEENER

LIDLAW BROTHERS

Chicago 6, Illinois

Summit, New Jersey

Palo Alto, California

Atlanta 3, Georgia

Dallas 1, Texas



Would you like to know what others are saying?

Teachers, we are glad to say, are people who speak their minds. At least, they have been telling us just what they think of Webster textbooks.

Here is what they say—

About Goals in Spelling

"Excellent for the actual teaching of spelling for functional use and not just a word list for the week."*

"It helps, not only in spelling, but in reading and writing as well."*

About Using Our Language

"I like the way in which new skills are always based on a real communications situation."*

"Colorful material . . . planned to be functionally useful in meeting the needs of practical classroom situations."*

*Names and addresses of correspondents will be supplied on request.

If you haven't had an opportunity to see for yourself what these Webster elementary textbook programs can do for your school, drop us a line. Our local representative will be delighted to show you.



WEBSTER PUBLISHING COMPANY

St. Louis 3

Dallas 1

Pasadena 2

LONGMANS JUNIOR BOOKS FOR SPRING 1954

The Wilderness Way

By **MERRITT PARMELEE ALLEN**. A exciting story of fur trapping in early America, as a young man follows LaSalle through wilderness and Indian ambush down the Mississippi. *Illustrated by Larry Toschik.* Ages 12-16. \$2.75

One Against the Sea

By **BETTY MORGAN BOWEN**. Sea adventure, heroic rescues and simple kindness in the fishing villages of the Yorkshire coast, where an American boy shows courage in time of danger. Ages 10-14. \$2.75

The House of the Fifers

By **REBECCA CAUDILL**. Pretty Monica, just fifteen, wonders why she should be sent to relatives in the country. The values she learns there see her through a time of crisis. *Illustrated by Genia.* Ages 12-16. \$2.75

Greeka: EAGLE OF THE HEBRIDES

By **JOSEPH E. CHIPPERFIELD**. The wild life of the Hebrides' fastness is seen through the eyes of a golden eagle in this epic of a king of the air who must find his kingdom and his mate
Decorations by Larry Toschik. Ages 12-16. \$3.00

Bramble Bush

By **MARGUERITE DICKSON**. Disappointment changes to joy when a girl finds fun and rewards in her job and friendship, and her blind friend sees again. *Illustrated by Ruth King. (Reissue).* Ages 12-16. \$2.75

Each One Teach One: FRANK LAUBACH

By **MARJORIE MEDARY**. This biography reads like an adventure story as it tells of the man who taught 60 million people to read in 239 languages and dialects. *Photographs and charts.* All ages. \$3.00

Stand By for Danger

By **E. D. MYGATT**. Amateur radio gets Pelican and Ned into trouble at school, but the headmaster sees possibilities in their hobby that lead to the rescue of a refugee scientist. Ages 10-14. \$2.50

LONGMANS, GREEN AND COMPANY • 55 Fifth Ave., New York 3

THE GINN BASIC READERS



The series that fits the book to the child

This popular basal reading series for grades one through eight is outstanding for its close co-ordination with child development. Its unique vertical organization permits a continuous developmental growth with no gaps between grades. The reading program is complete with readiness books, chart, cards, readers, workbooks, teachers' manuals, and tests for grades 1-8.



GINN ENRICHMENT READERS

COME WITH US — pre-primer level
UNDER THE APPLE TREE — primer level

A new feature of the *Ginn Basic* series, the *Ginn Enrichment Readers* provide additional reading material which the slow learner will be able to read with a minimum amount of guidance and the fast reader independently. They maintain the same high literary quality as the *Ginn Basic Readers* and give more practice in using the basic vocabulary. More *Enrichment Readers* will follow.

GINN and COMPANY

Sales Offices:
Dallas 1

New York 11
Columbus 16

Chicago 16
San Francisco 3

Home Office: Boston
Atlanta 3
Toronto 7